NOTTINGHAMSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Fuel Poverty

Profile Pack

March 2024

Topic Information	
Topic owner	Nottinghamshire County Council
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Executive Summary

Background

In order for people to reach their potential they need all of the right ‘building blocks’ in place: including stable jobs, good pay, safe and stable housing and good education, however both nationally and locally, many of these ‘blocks’ are missing for some people (5).

Affordable, warm, and safe housing is a cornerstone of good health, however, many people in the UK are living in homes that do not meet basic health and safety standards, triggering ill health such as respiratory conditions and chronic stress, ultimately cutting lives short.

This profile pack explores the role and impact of fuel poverty as one of the building blocks of health providing recommendations for further action and research.

National Context

Fuel poverty relates to households that cannot meet their energy needs at a reasonable cost. In England, the Low-Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) definition for fuel poverty is used, meaning a household is fuel poor if:

• They are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below; and

• They spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

While the Low-Income High Cost (LIHC) indicator is used to measure the extent of fuel poverty, the fuel poverty gap is used to measure its depth. The fuel poverty gap is the reduction in fuel costs that would be necessary to lift a household out of fuel poverty. In the UK, the average fuel poverty gap rose by 33% between 2021 and 2022 due to rising energy prices, with the average fuel poverty gap in the East Midlands around £263.

Certain households are also more likely to be in fuel poverty, including low-income households, households with dependent children, households home to people living with disabilities, households where the age of the oldest member is between 16 and 24, and minority ethnic households, with single parent households the household most likely to be fuel poor.

Fuel poverty is driven by 3 main factors: household income, high or unmanageable energy costs and the energy efficiency of a home.

The ‘cost of living crisis’ in the UK has caused ‘real’ disposable income to fall. Despite median disposable income increasing by 1.6% to £66,000 for the richest fifth of people, median disposable income for the poorest fifth of the population decreased by 3.8% to £14,500 in 2022. In 2022, around 28% of households in England were found to be low-income households, an increase of 818,000 (13.5%) since 2019.

Global energy prices have also risen significantly in recent years, with the price of gas in January 2022 almost four times higher than in early 2021. The typical cost of energy in April 2023 reached about 2.5 times pre-crisis costs. Rises in the cost of energy are down to several factors, including:

• The increase in global energy demand as Covid-19 lockdowns were lifted.

• Gas supply disruption following military action in Ukraine.

• Across Europe, warmer weather during summer 2022 increased the demand of energy for cooling, while also decreasing energy supplies due to drought and the subsequent reduction in the supply of hydropower.

Additionally, there are several factors associated with the energy efficiency of housing, including property type, tenure, and its construction date. The median energy efficiency score for households in England was 66 up to March 2021, equivalent to band D, highlighting the poor energy efficiency of a large proportion of households in England.

Around 47.2% of all low-income households live in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or worse. For the least efficient properties (band F/G), fuel costs are nearly three times as high compared to costs for the most efficient properties (band A-C) in 2022.

Cold homes can cause issues such as damp and mould and can have severe impacts on physical and mental health if the household cannot afford the heating costs.

According to the English Housing Survey, around 904,000 homes in England had damp problems in 2021 with 11% of these in the private rented sector. An estimated 653,000 households in England also lived with a ‘category 1 hazard’ of excess cold – i.e., a home with poor energy efficiency that could lead to cold conditions posing a serious risk to health and safety.

Homes that are cold due to fuel poverty exacerbate health inequalities with groups who are more vulnerable to health problems associated with cold homes and/or who may have less contact with health service such as people on low income or people over 65. Specifically looking at low-income households, in 2020, around 7% of households on the lowest incomes were estimated to have damp problems at home, compared with around 2% of households on the highest incomes.

In 2019 it was estimated the NHS spends at least £2.5 billion per year on treating illnesses that are directly linked to cold, damp, and dangerous homes.

The combination of these factors has resulted in increases to national fuel poverty, with National Energy Action's figures showing that the number of households in fuel poverty will increase from 4.5 million UK households from October 2022 to 8.4 million in October 2023.

Local Context

Around 13.6% of households in Nottinghamshire are living in fuel poverty. Across Nottinghamshire, Mansfield has the highest percentage of fuel poor households (16.2%) which is higher than both the England and Nottinghamshire average.

Areas in Mansfield featured 5 times out of the 10 Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOA) with the highest percentage of fuel poor households, with the area with the highest percentage located in Bassetlaw (24.3%).

Mansfield also has the highest number of households with a prepayment meter, followed by Ashfield, with households with pre-payment meters installed more likely to be living in fuel poverty.

Out of the 10 MSOA with the highest number of households with a prepayment meter, areas in Ashfield featured 4 times, with the area with the highest number located in Mansfield (1113).

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) tell you how energy efficient a building is and give it a rating from A (very efficient) to G (inefficient). In Nottinghamshire, Broxtowe has the highest proportion of households rated with an EPC of below C (69.1%), with Rushcliffe having the least (58.5%).

When looking at the 10 MSOA with the highest number of households with an energy performance certificate rating of D-G, areas in Ashfield featured 4 times, with the area with the highest number of D-G certified households also located in Ashfield (5172). The MSOA with the highest percentage of households with an energy performance certificate rating of D-G was Tuxford, Markham & Rampton (81.7%), located in Bassetlaw.

Unmet Needs and Service Gaps – What we Still Need to Improve

- There are high and growing levels of fuel poverty across Nottinghamshire and further support is required to address the drivers of fuel poverty, particularly in the areas most in need previously highlighted.
- The energy efficiency of a household is one of the three main fuel poverty drivers. Local intelligence highlights that many households in Nottinghamshire have a poor energy efficiency.
- There is a lack of insight into the housing stock conditions of private sector housing in Nottinghamshire. Currently much of this data is either incomplete or out of date.

Recommendations for Consideration

	Recommendation	**Lead(s)**
	Service Delivery	
1	Target interventions. Ashfield, Mansfield, and Bassetlaw areas are highlighted as having a higher proportion of households experiencing fuel poverty in Nottinghamshire. The highlighted Middle Super Output Areas within each district should be further targeted through national and local interventions and improvements. The energy efficiency of a household is one of the three main fuel poverty drivers. Local intelligence highlights that many households in Nottinghamshire have poor energy efficiency. Interventions should target the areas highlighted.	District and Borough Councils and Nottinghamshire County Council.
	Insight	
2	Housing stock conditions survey. Gathering insight into the housing stock conditions of private sector housing in Nottinghamshire would allow fuel poor households living in non-decent conditions to be identified and further supported through national and local interventions and improvements.	District and Borough Councils and Nottinghamshire County Council.

What do we know and what does that tell us?

This Joint Strategic Needs Assessment seeks to explore the following areas:

- What is the national picture of fuel poverty and what are its causes?
- What effect have increases to the cost of living had on fuel poverty and cold homes?
- What is the impact of fuel poverty, particularly on those from vulnerable groups?
- What does fuel poverty look like in Nottinghamshire?
- What is being done about fuel poverty?
- What further action and research is needed?

Key Facts

- It is estimated that it costs the NHS £1.4bn each year to treat those who are affected by poor housing (1).
- Every £1 spent on improving homes saves the NHS £70 over 10 years (2).
- Every £1 invested in housing delivers £2 of benefit through costs avoided to public services including care, health, and crime costs (3).
- In 2014 it was estimated the NHS spends at least £2.5 billion per year on treating illnesses that are directly linked to living in cold, damp, and dangerous homes (4).
- In 2019, an estimated 653,000 households in England lived with a 'category 1 hazard' of excess cold (29).
- In the UK, the average fuel poverty gap rose by 33% between 2021 and 2022 (10).
- Single parent households are the households most likely to be fuel poor (10).
- The overall average domestic gas and electricity bill increased by 46% between 2021 and 2022 (10).
- 49,049 (13.6%) households in Nottinghamshire are currently living in fuel poverty compared with the England average of 13.2% (30).
- There is a strong positive correlation between fuel poverty and deprivation.

1. Introduction. Safe and Stable Housing, a Building Block of Health

Being 'healthy' is often thought of as eating the right foods and getting enough exercise, however almost every aspect of our lives impacts our health and the number of years we live.

In order for people to reach their potential they need all of the right 'building blocks' in place: stable jobs, good pay, safe and stable housing and good education, however both nationally and locally, many of these 'blocks' are missing for some people (5).

Affordable, warm, and safe housing is a cornerstone of good health, however, many people in the UK are living in homes that do not meet basic health and safety standards, triggering ill health such as respiratory conditions and chronic stress, ultimately cutting lives short.

The Nottinghamshire Plan (2021) and the Nottinghamshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2026) both put housing at its heart stating that Nottinghamshire County Council want to ensure that its residents live healthier and happier lives, prosper in their communities, and remain independent in later life.

The following document will explore the role and impact of fuel poverty as one of the building blocks of health providing recommendations for further action and research in this area to support strategic ambitions and provide insight to partners across the Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System.

2. What is Fuel Poverty?

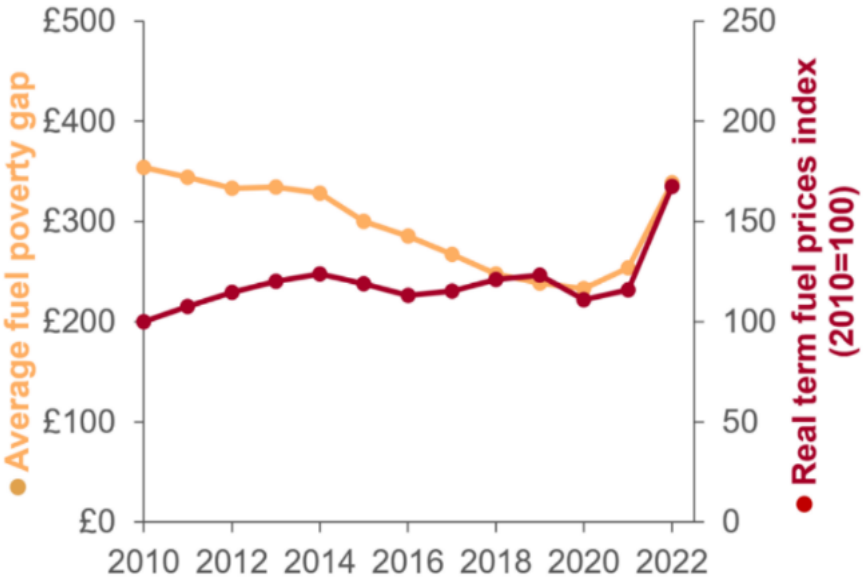
Fuel poverty relates to households that cannot meet their energy needs at a reasonable cost. In England, the Low-Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) definition for fuel poverty is used, meaning a household is fuel poor if:

• They are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below, and

• They spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

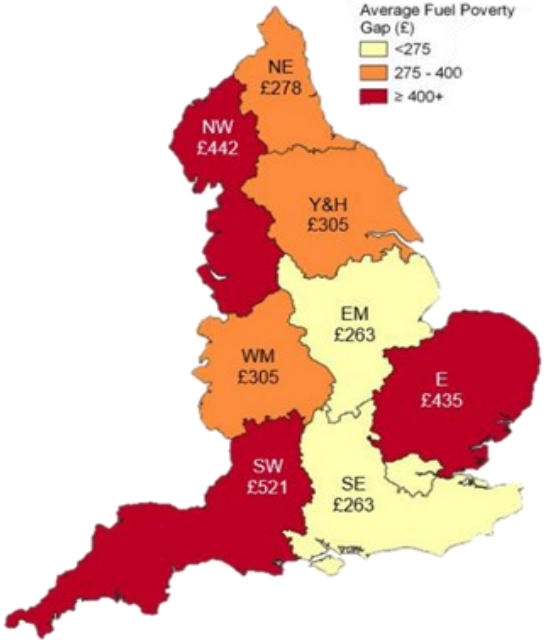
While the Low-Income High Cost (LIHC) indicator is used to measure the extent of fuel poverty, the fuel poverty gap is used to measure its depth. The fuel poverty gap is the reduction in spending that would be necessary to lift a household out of fuel poverty. In the UK, the average fuel poverty gap rose by 33% between 2021 and 2022 due to rising energy prices (see figure.1), with the average fuel poverty gap in the East Midlands around £263 (see figure.2).

Figure.1 Changes to Fuel prices and the Average Fuel Poverty Gap in England (6)



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Figure.2 The Average Fuel Poverty gap in England (2022) (6)



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

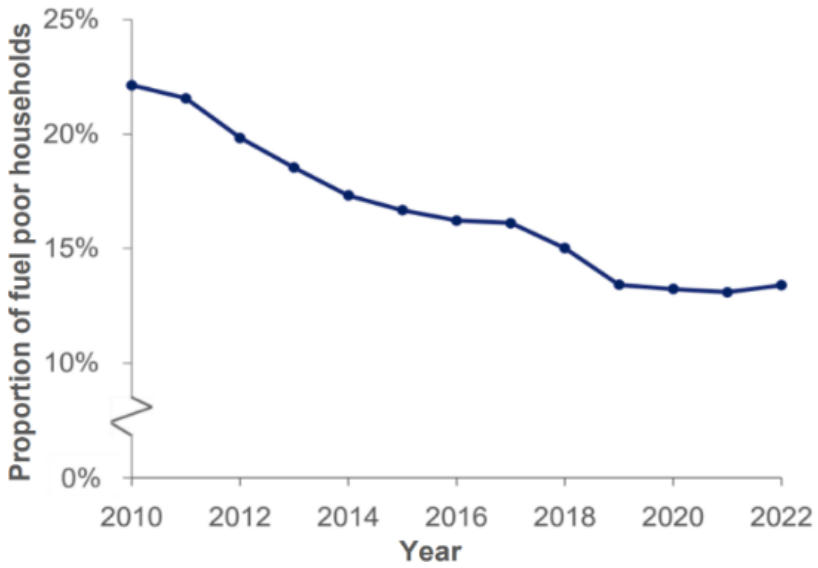
3. What Causes Fuel Poverty?

Fuel poverty is driven by 3 main factors: household income, high or unmanageable energy costs and the energy efficiency of a home (10). Fuel poverty in England had been steadily decreasing since 2010, however in recent years the number of fuel poor households has begun to increase (see figure.3).

3.1. Household Income

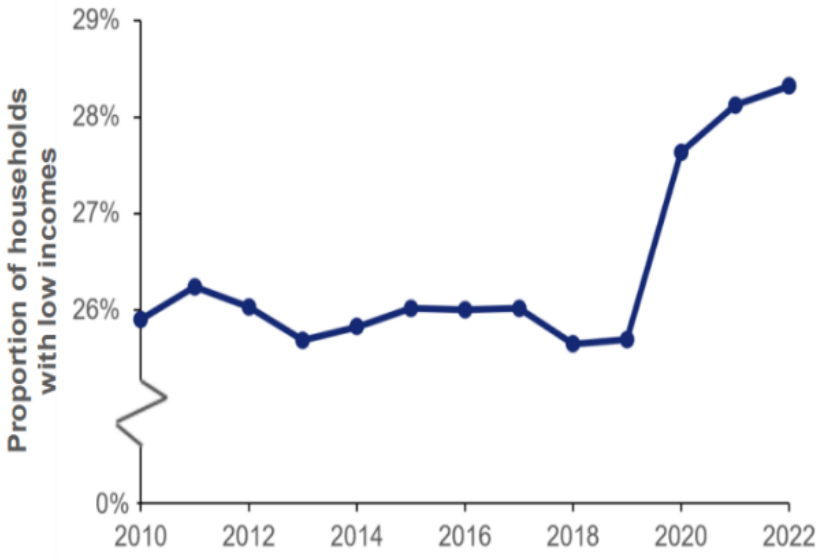
The ‘cost of living crisis’ in the UK has caused ‘real’ disposable income to fall. Despite median disposable income increasing by 1.6% to £66,000 for the richest fifth of people, median disposable income for the poorest fifth of the population decreased by 3.8% to £14,500 in 2022 (8). Additionally, it was projected that real household disposable income per person will fall by 3.2% in 2023, after a 3.1% fall in 2022 and that the bottom 10% of the population in terms of income, faced an inflation rate of 10.9% compared to 7.9% for the wealthiest 10% (9). Lastly, in 2022, around 28% of households in England were found to be low-income households (see figure.4), an increase of 818,000 (13.5%) since 2019. This rise in the proportion of low-income households was likely fuelled by the negative impact of Covid-19 on household incomes alongside a period of high energy price inflation (10).

Figure.3 The change in fuel poor households in England (6)



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Figure.4 Proportion of households with low incomes in England since 2010 (6)



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

3.2. Energy Costs

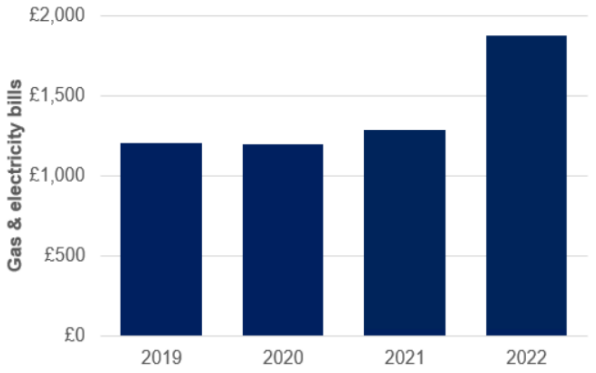
Global energy prices have risen significantly in recent years, with the price of gas in January 2022 almost four times higher than in early 2021. The typical cost of energy in April 2023 reached about 2.5 times pre-crisis costs (11). Rises in the cost of energy are due to several factors, including:

• The increase in global energy demand as Covid-19 lockdowns were lifted.

• Gas supply disruption following military action in Ukraine.

• Across Europe, warmer weather during summer 2022 increased the demand of energy for cooling, while also decreasing energy supplies due to drought and the subsequent reduction in the supply of hydropower (12).

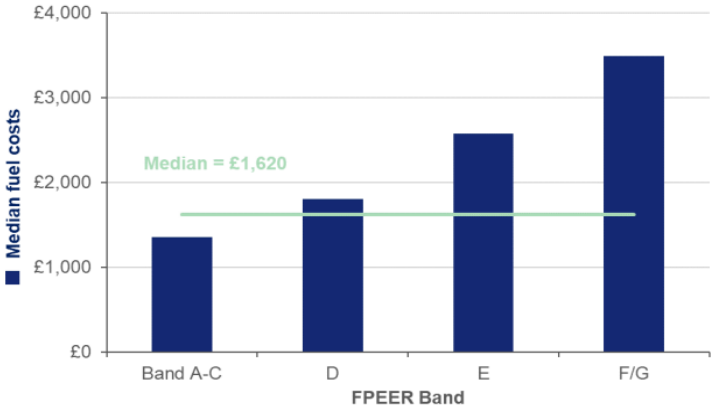
Figure.5 The Annual Change in Average Gas and Domestic Energy Bills (10)



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

The UK is particularly vulnerable to rising energy costs due to 85% of households relying on gas boilers to heat homes, 40% of electricity being generated in gas fired power stations, and poorer domestic insulation as compared to other European countries (13). The 54% rise in the energy price cap means a household using a typical amount of gas and electricity will now pay £1,971 per year (see figure.5). The overall average domestic gas and electricity bill increased by 46% between 2021 and 2022 in real terms (14). Lower income households are most likely to be the worst effected as they spend a higher proportion of their income on utility bills and are more likely to be in fuel poverty. Prepayment meters are commonly used by those on lower incomes or who have arrears from previous credit meters, however, the proportion of those using a prepayment meter to pay for their energy bills who are living in fuel poverty is almost three times higher than direct debit customers (15).

Figure.6 Fuel Costs Based on the Efficiency of Properties (2022) (10)



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

3.3. Energy Efficiency

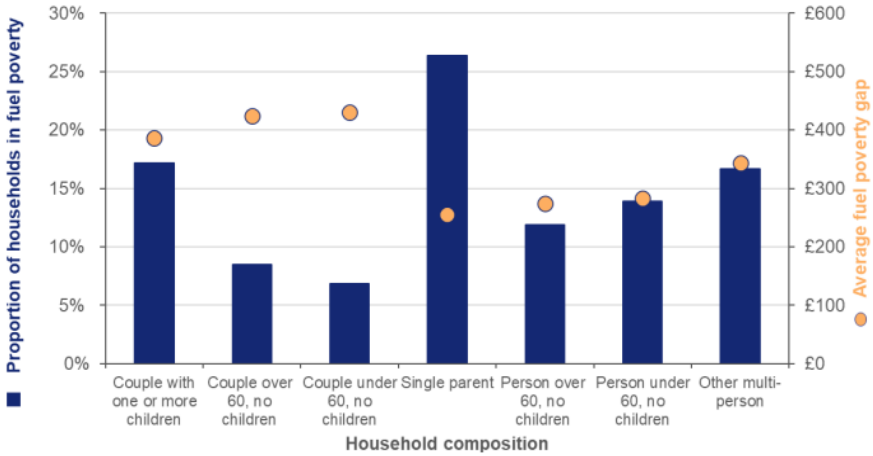
There are several factors associated with the energy efficiency of housing, including property type, tenure, and its construction date. The median energy efficiency score for households in England was 66 up to March 2021, equivalent to band D, highlighting the poor energy efficiency of a large proportion of households in England (16). By 2030, the aim is to upgrade as many fuel poor homes to a minimum of band C, however despite this, there has been no increase in the share of households meeting the 2030 fuel poverty target in 2022, with 47.2 per cent of all low income households living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or worse. For the least efficient properties (band F/G), fuel costs are nearly three times as high compared to costs for the most efficient properties (band A-C) in 2022, highlighting the importance of energy efficiency for reducing the chances of people falling into fuel poverty (see figure 6).

The combination of these factors has resulted in increases to national fuel poverty, with National Energy Action's figures showing that the number of households in fuel poverty will increase from 4.5 million UK households from October 2022 to 8.4 million in October 2023.

Certain households are also more likely to be in fuel poverty, including low-income households, households with dependent children, households home to people living with disabilities, households where the age of the oldest member is between 16 and 24, and minority ethnic households (17), with single parent households the household most likely to be fuel poor (see figures 7 and 8). Figures suggest that since April 2023, the following UK groups are in fuel poverty:

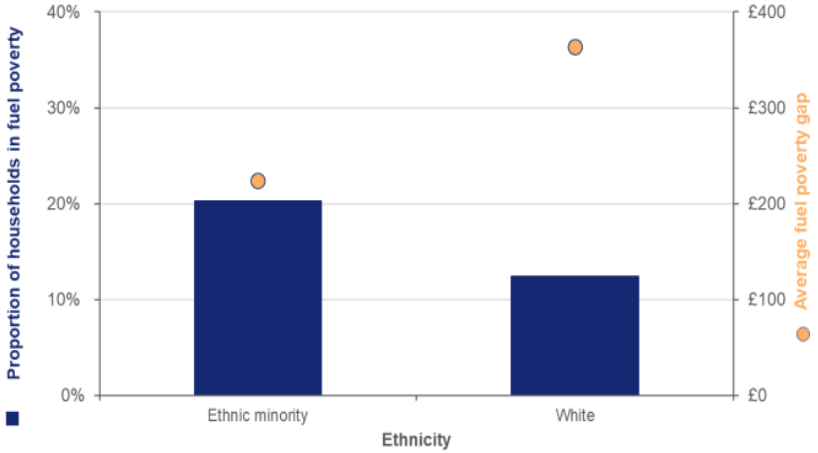
- 1.8 million carers
- 5.9 million low-income and financially vulnerable households
- 3.6 million people with a disability
- 1.6 million households in off-gas homes (18)

Figure.7 Proportion of Households in Fuel Poverty (2022) (10)



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Figure.8 Proportion of Ethnic Minority Households in Fuel Poverty (2022) (10)

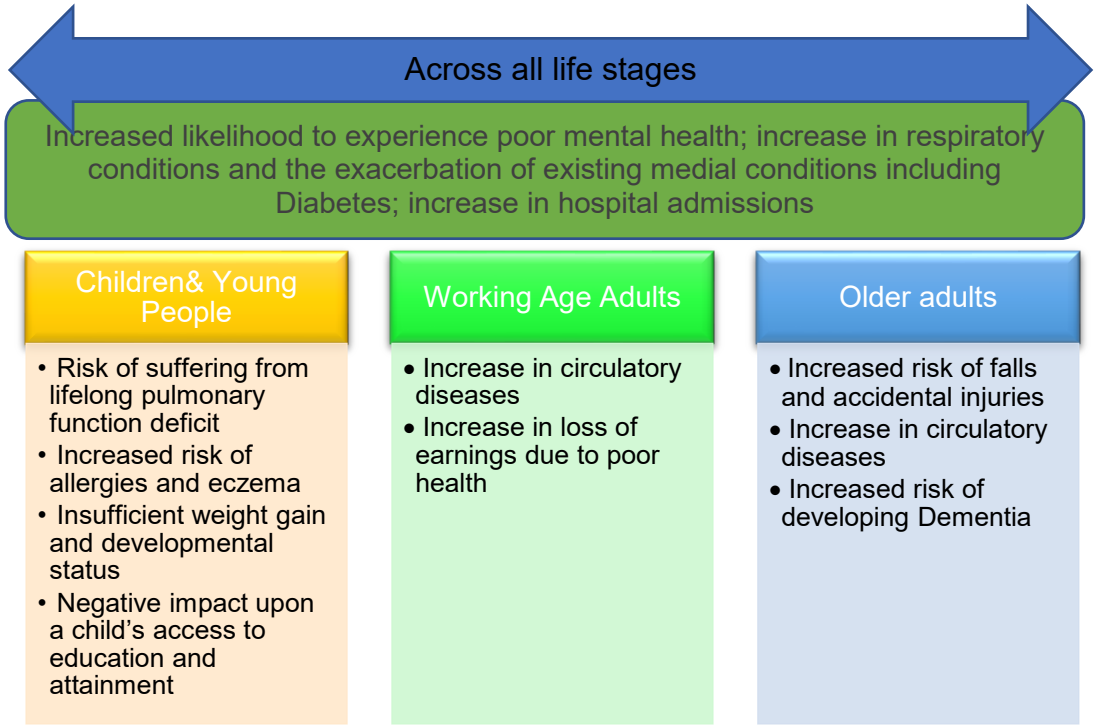


Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

4. The Impact of Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty can have a range of serious health impacts. Existing health conditions can be affected by the cold and others can be brought on because of prolonged exposure to the cold as well as causing other negative non-health related consequences. These include:

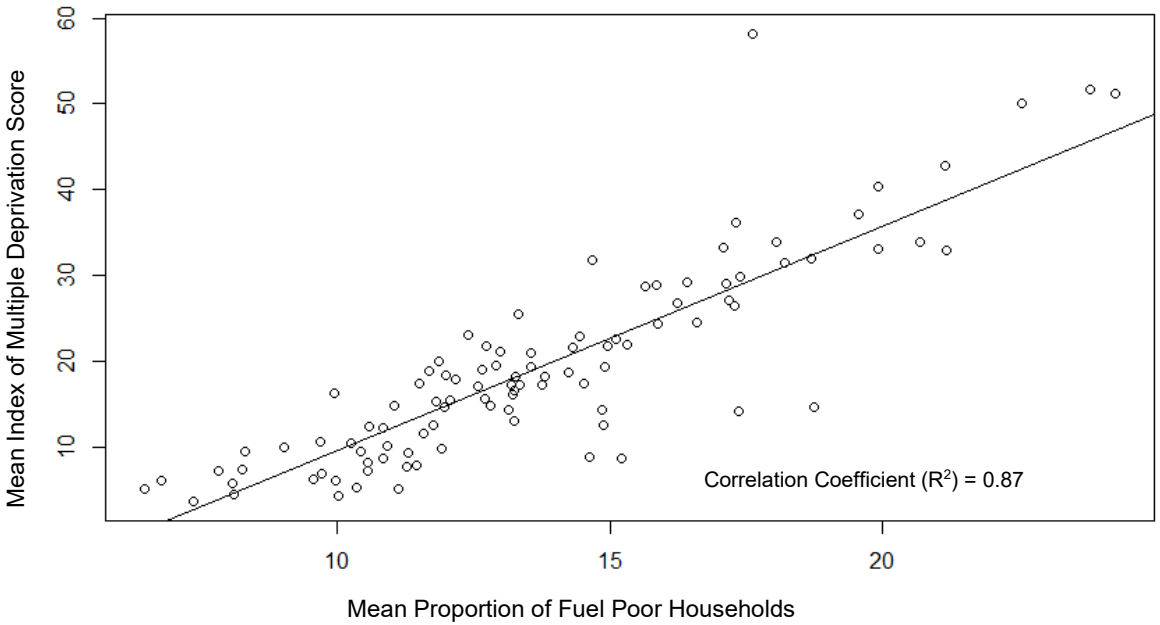
Figure.9 The Effect of Fuel Poverty on Health Across a Lifecycle (19,20)



5. Fuel Poverty and Deprivation

Across Nottinghamshire, there was found to be a strong positive correlation between fuel poverty and deprivation, suggesting households in more deprived areas were also likely to be living in fuel poverty.

Figure.10 The Correlation Between the Proportion of Fuel Poor Households and Areas of Deprivation in Nottinghamshire (21)



Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

6. Opinions and Lifestyle Survey June 2023 (22)

As of June 2023, the UK public were asked what actions they were taking because of the rising cost of living.

The most common actions taken for those seeing a rise in the cost of living are (22):

- Spending less on non-essentials (65%)
- Using less fuel such as gas or electricity in my home (56%)
- Shopping around more (47%)
- Spending less on food shopping and essentials (42%)
- Cutting back on non-essential journeys in my vehicle (33%)
- Using my savings (32%)

Most common impacts observed from cost-of-living crisis:

- The price of my food shop has increased (97%)
- My gas or electricity bills have increased (64%)
- The price of my fuel has increased (39%)

Source: Office for National Statistics. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

7. Cost of Living Crisis - Citizens Advice Dashboard (23)

- In 2023, Citizens Advice have already helped as many people who couldn't top up their prepayment meters than in the whole of 2019, 2020 and 2021 combined.
- As of May 2023, more people have needed crisis support than at this point of the year in any other year on record, 20% higher than May 2022.
- By the end of May 2023 130,000 people have been supported with energy issues, 34% higher than the same point in 2022 and higher than at this point in any year on record.
- The number of people given crisis support (food bank referrals and emergency charitable support) more than tripled between March 2020 and March 2023.

- Certain groups of people receiving support are struggling more during the crisis. In March 2023, a record number of disabled people with cost-of-living issues were supported.
- 60.5% of people unable to top up their prepayment meter are either disabled or living with a long-term health condition.
- More than 60% of the people given crisis support are disabled or have a long-term health condition.
- The number of people needing help with crisis support who are employed has nearly tripled since 2020.
- So far in 2023, more people with energy debts have received support than at this point in any other year.
- The average energy debt increases for disabled people (15%↑), and people with long-term health conditions (30%↑), increased more than it did for those with no disabilities or long-term health conditions (12%↑).
- Over the last 4 years, the average annual income needed to avoid a negative budget has risen by 127% (£8926). At the same time, the minimum wage and the average incomes of debt clients have only increased by 21% (£3044).

Source: Citizens Advice

8. Cold Homes

Cold homes can have severe impacts on physical and mental health if the household cannot afford the heating costs (24). Condensation and damp in homes for example can lead to mould growth, and inhaling mould spores can cause allergic type reactions, the development or worsening of asthma, respiratory infections, coughs, wheezing and shortness of breath. Cold homes have also been found to exacerbate mental health conditions with depression and anxiety more common among people living in cold and damp conditions. In young people, 28% living in cold homes reported four or more negative mental health symptoms, compared with only 4% of young people who had always lived in warm homes (25). Countries which have more energy efficient housing have lower excess winter deaths (EWD) and it is estimated that EWD in the coldest 25% of housing are almost 3 times as high as in the warmest 25%, with 21.5% of all EDWs attributable to the coldest quarter of housing (26). The Fuel Poverty Index for example has been found to be a predicter of hospital admittance, indicating that a relationship exists between the energy efficiency of the home and winter respiratory symptoms among older people. England's EWD index is higher than the Northern European average.

According to the English Housing Survey, around 904,000 homes in England had damp problems in 2021 with 11% of these in the private rented sector. An estimated 653,000 households in England also lived with a 'category 1 hazard' of excess cold – i.e. a home with poor energy efficiency that could lead to cold conditions posing a serious risk to health and safety (29).

One of the main reasons a person may live in low indoor temperatures during winter is due to their inability to heat their home affordably. Other reasons include a lack of awareness of the effect of cold on health, as well as situational, attitudinal, or behavioural factors including personal

values such as stoicism or thrift (27). Homes that are cold due to fuel poverty exacerbate health inequalities for groups who are more vulnerable to health problems associated with cold homes and/or who may have less contact with health services include. The 2019 Public Health England report on data sources to support local services tackling health risks of cold homes highlights the following group who are more vulnerable (27):

- people with cardiovascular conditions
- people with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and childhood asthma)
- people with mental health conditions
- people with disabilities
- older people (65 and older)
- young children (under 5)
- pregnant women
- people on a low income
- people who have attended hospital due to a fall
- people who move in and out of homelessness
- people with addictions
- recent immigrants and asylum seekers

Specifically looking at low-income households, in 2020, around 7% of households on the lowest incomes were estimated to have damp problems at home, compared with around 2% of households on the highest incomes (29).

In 2019 it was estimated the NHS spends at least £2.5 billion per year on treating illnesses that are directly linked to cold, damp, and dangerous homes (4).

9. Local Intelligence – Fuel Poverty

Table.1 The percentage of fuel poor households in each locality (30)

Area	Percentage of Fuel Poor Households (%)
Ashfield	15.5
Bassetlaw	15.0
Broxtowe	13.1
Gedling	12.0
Mansfield	16.2
Newark and Sherwood	13.8
Rushcliffe	10.3
Nottinghamshire	13.6
England	13.2

Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Table.2 Nottinghamshire Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOA) with the highest percentage of fuel poor households (30)

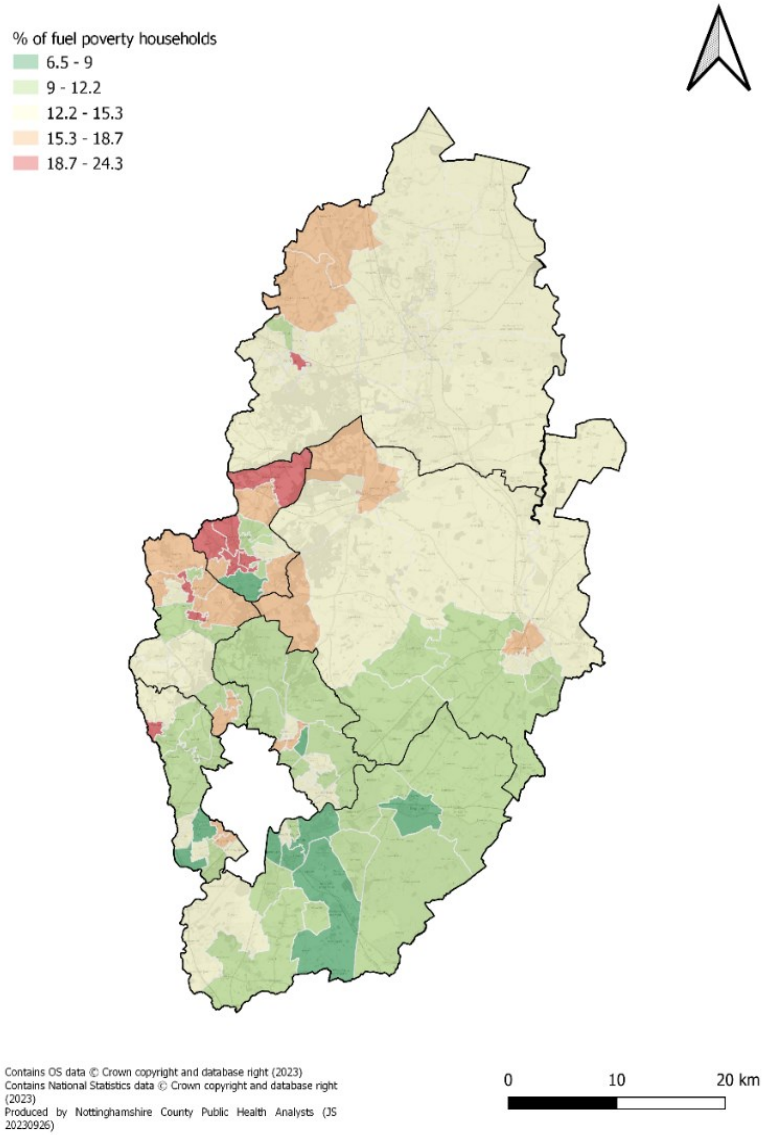
Area	Middle Layer Super Output Areas	Percentage of Fuel Poor Households (%)
Bassetlaw	Worksop Cheapside	24.3
Ashfield	Sutton Central & Leamington	23.8
Mansfield	Newgate & Carr Bank	22.5
Mansfield	Church Warsop & Meden Vale	21.2
Ashfield	Kirkby Central	21.2
Mansfield	Woodhouse	20.7
Mansfield	Abbott Road & Pleasley Hill	19.9
Mansfield	Mansfield Town Centre & Broomhill	19.9
Broxtowe	Eastwood Town	19.6
Broxtowe	Beeston Town	18.7

Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Table 1 shows the percentage of fuel poor households in each locality (30). Overall, Mansfield is the district which has the highest percentage of fuel poor households in Nottinghamshire, higher than both the England and Nottinghamshire average, with Rushcliffe containing the least.

Table 2 shows that areas in Mansfield featured 5 times out of the 10 MSOA with the highest percentage of fuel poor households, with the area with the highest percentage located in Bassetlaw. The MSOA with the lowest percentage of fuel poor households was Gamston & Holme Pierrepoint (6.5%) located in Rushcliffe (30).

Figure 11 % of fuel poor households (30)



9.2. Prepayment Meters

As previously referenced, households with pre-payment meters installed are more likely to be living in fuel poverty.

Table 3, below, shows that in Nottinghamshire, Mansfield has the highest number of households with a prepayment meter, followed by Ashfield, with Rushcliffe containing the least amount.

Table.3 The number of households with a prepayment meter in each population (31)

Area	Number of Households with a Prepayment Meter
Ashfield	5873
Bassetlaw	5266
Broxtowe	2946
Gedling	3675
Mansfield	6280
Newark and Sherwood	4705
Rushcliffe	1556

Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Figure 12 No. of dwellings with prepayment meters (31)

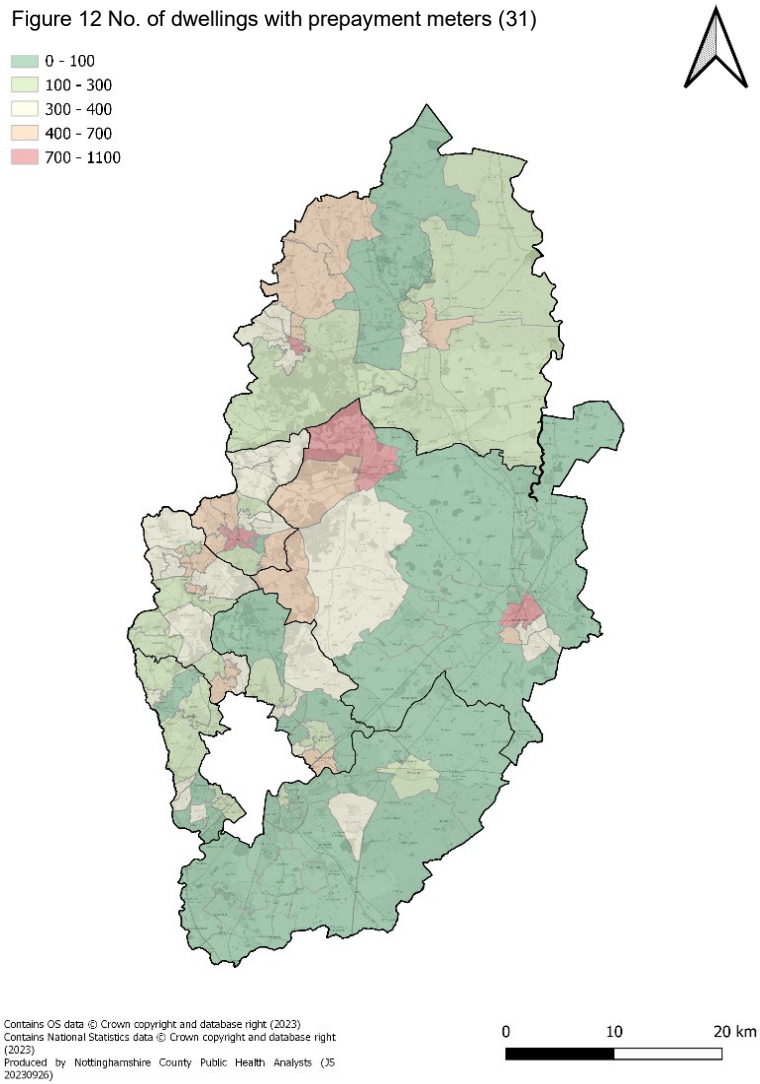


Table.4 Nottinghamshire Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOA) with the highest number of households with a prepayment meter (31)

District/Borough	MSOA	Number of Households with a Prepayment Meter
Mansfield	Mansfield Town Centre & Broomhill	1113
Mansfield	Newgate & Carr Bank	949
Newark & Sherwood	Newark North	928
Bassetlaw	Worksop Cheapside	828
Newark & Sherwood	Ollerton & Boughton	766
Ashfield	Sutton Forest Side & New Cross	659
Mansfield	Oak Tree & Ransom Wood	603
Ashfield	Sutton Central & Leamington	600
Ashfield	Grange Farm & Ladybrook	596
Ashfield	Hucknall Town	562

Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Table 4, above, demonstrates that out of the 10 MSOA with the highest number of households with a prepayment meter, areas in Ashfield featured 4 times, with the area with the highest number located in Mansfield. The MSOA with the lowest number of households with a prepayment meter was Keyworth North, Tollerton & Willoughby (8) located in Rushcliffe (31).

9.3. Energy Performance Certificate Rating

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) tell you how energy efficient a building is and give it a rating from A (very efficient) to G (inefficient). Table 5, below, demonstrates that in Nottinghamshire, Broxtowe has the highest proportion of households rated with an EPC of below C, with Rushcliffe having the least.

Table.5 The percentage of households with an energy performance certificate rating of D-G in each population (32)

Area	D-G Certified Households	Percentage of D-G Certified Households (%)
Ashfield	51,904	59.7
Bassetlaw	33,363	61.5
Broxtowe	28,146	69.1
Gedling	32,122	62.8
Mansfield	26,189	59.6
Newark and Sherwood	31,046	59.3
Rushcliffe	27,510	58.5

Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Figure 13 No. of households in D-G EPC rating (32)

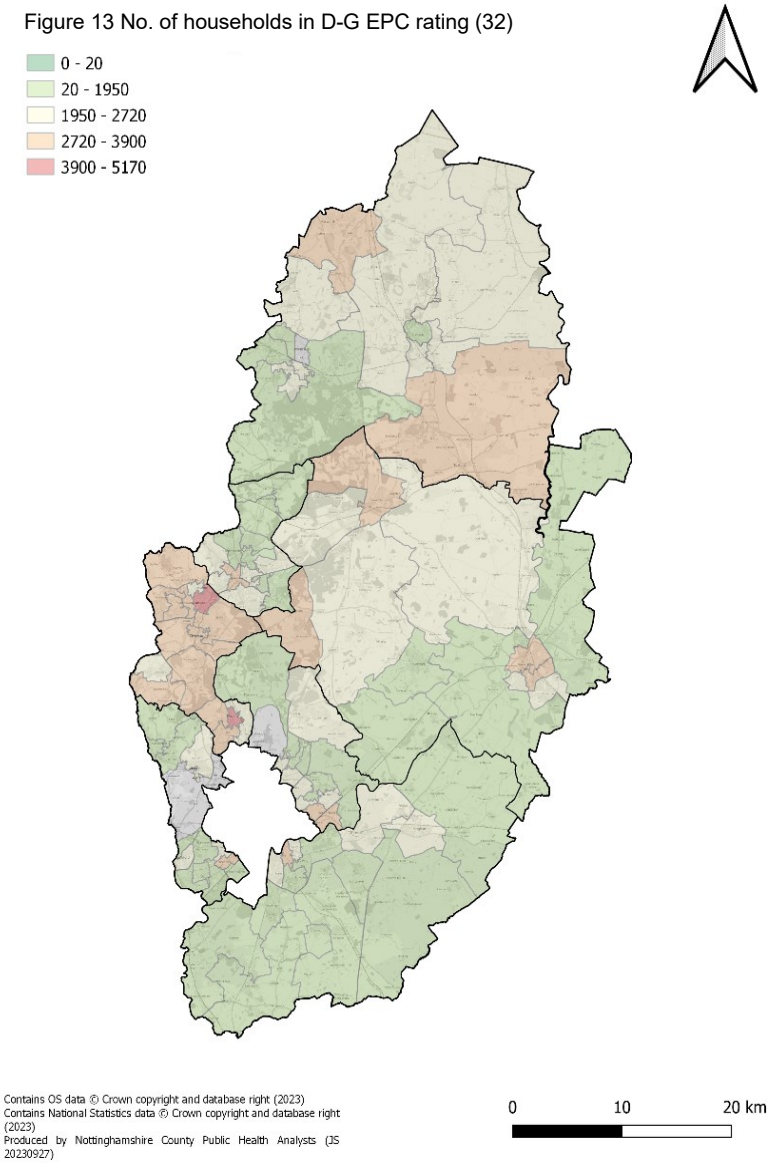


Table.6 Nottinghamshire MSOA with the highest number of households with an energy performance certificate rating of D-G (32)

District/Borough	MSOA	D-G Certified Households	Percentage of D-G Certified Households (%)
Ashfield	Sutton Forest Side & New Cross	5172	62.8
Ashfield	Hucknall Town	5078	64.2
Newark and Sherwood	Newark North	3901	61
Mansfield	Mansfield Town Centre & Broomhill	3746	66.7
Ashfield	Sutton St Mary's & Ashfields	3723	61.8
Ashfield	Sutton Central & Leamington	3632	53.3
Rushcliffe	West Bridgford	3554	70
Gedling	Carlton	3444	67.6
Gedling	Netherfield & Colwick	3435	70.4
Bassetlaw	Tuxford, Markham & Rampton	3289	81.7

Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.
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When looking at the 10 MSOA with the highest number of households with an energy performance certificate rating of D-G, as shown in table 6, above, areas in Ashfield featured 4 times, with the area with the highest number of D-G certified households also located in Ashfield. The MSOA with the highest percentage of households with an energy performance certificate rating of D-G was in Bassetlaw (32).

10. National Policy

With safe and stable housing an important building block of health, national plans for improved health and wellbeing must give thought to the home environment and housing circumstances. This has seen the government introduce a range of policies designed to keep people warm and safe in their home including:

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (2004) - A risk assessment tool used by local authorities to assess hazards in residential properties, including excess cold. If a hazard is identified at the most serious 'Category 1' level, then the local authority has a duty to take enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004. A review in 2018 published that it would be made simpler and quicker for local authorities to assess health and safety standards in rented homes, helping to improve conditions for tenants and better tackle rogue landlords.

The Clean Growth Strategy (2017) – A strategy requiring as many homes as possible to meet EPC C by 2035.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (2018) – Standards requiring private landlords who let out F or G rated properties to improve their properties to a minimum energy performance rating of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band E. Currently in consultation, the government are updating these standards proposing to raise the minimum energy performance standard to EPC Band C by 2030.

Future Homes Standard (2019) - From 2025, the Future Homes Standard will ensure that new homes produce at least 75% lower CO2 emissions compared to those built to current standards.

Housing Ombudsman's reports: Spotlight on Damp and Mould: It's not Lifestyle (2021) – The requirement of landlords to have a strong strategy in place to identify and eliminate damp and mould in properties, one which avoids apportioning blame.

Social Housing (Regulation) Bill (2022) - Making safety, transparency and energy efficiency an objective of the Regulator of Social Housing.

Renters Reform Bill (2022) - The Renters (Reform) Bill will abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions and deliver a simpler, more secure tenancy structure. This will provide tenants with greater security, supporting them to put down roots in their community, whilst ensuring landlords remain confident that they can regain their property where they need to. Renters will also feel empowered to challenge the small minority of landlords who provide poor quality housing without the worry of a 'no fault' eviction.

Decent Homes Standard Review (2022) - A legally binding Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector requiring landlords to ensure housing conditions are free from the most serious health and safety hazards, such as fall risks, fire risks, or carbon monoxide poisoning, ensuring rented homes don't fall into disrepair, and that problems are addressed before they deteriorate.

Awaabs Law (2023) – Enforcement for social landlords to fix damp and mould within strict time limits, in a new amendment to the Social Housing Regulation Bill.

12. Government Support

According to the Office for National Statistics, 95% of adults in Great Britain reported an increase in their cost of living in May 2023, shining the spotlight on the area of health and housing, specifically energy prices and fuel poverty. This has led to a variety of national responses including government support with energy bills such as the Energy Price Guarantee. Further government support with energy bills includes:

- Warm Home Discount Scheme: Low income and vulnerable households received a £140 rebate off electricity bills in 2021/22 which was increased to £150 in 2022/23 and offered to an increased number of eligible households.
- Energy Bills Rebate: A one-off repayable discount to energy bills for all households in 2022 and an additional council tax rebate to all Council taxpayers in England in bands A to D. All domestic electricity customers received £200 off their energy bills from October 2022, with 80 per cent of households receiving a £150 Council Tax rebate from April 2022.
- The Winter Fuel Payment – In addition to the Winter Fuel Payment to pensioners, during winter 2022/23 pensioners received a one-off £300 cost of living payment.
- Disability Cost of Living Payment – Those in receipt of certain disability benefits, such as Personal Independence Payments, received an additional £150 during 2023.
- Low-income benefits and tax credits Cost of Living Payment – Those in receipt of certain benefits or tax credits may be entitled to up to 3 Cost of Living Payments of £301, £300, and £299 across 2023/24.

The government is also investing £12 billion in Help to Heat schemes to make sure homes are warmer and cheaper to heat. This includes the:

- Boiler Upgrade Scheme - Providing grants to property owners to install low carbon heating systems such as heat pumps.
- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund – Funding to upgrade social housing stock currently below EPC rating D up to that standard.
- Energy Company Obligation (ECO) - Energy suppliers to help households in receipt of certain benefits or if living in social housing to reduce the costs of their home heating by fitting energy-saving measures.

The Sustainable Warmth Competition also awards funding to local authorities to help them upgrade energy inefficient homes of low-income households in England. This includes:

- Local Authority Delivery Phase 3 (LAD3) scheme for low-income homes heated by mains gas.
- Home Upgrade Grant Phase 1 (HUG1) and Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) scheme for low-income households off the gas grid.

13. Nottinghamshire County Council Safe and Stable Housing

In May 2022, the Nottinghamshire County Council Cabinet approved investment from the Public Health Grant in alignment with a range of Public Health priorities including developing Healthy and Sustainable Places, one of the ambitions within the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026, developing places where residents can grow live and work in places that promote good health. This investment included funding for projects related to safe and stable housing, specifically to fund the Nottinghamshire Energy Partnership Healthy Housing Service until 2026.

The Nottinghamshire Plan 2021-2031 includes a focus on housing and health, striving to help people to live healthier and more independent lives, supporting communities and families and keeping them safe.

Nottinghamshire County Council have prepared a draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028, setting out a commitment to support housing and independent living across the County.

14. Local Interventions

There are also a variety of local interventions designed to support people to live in safe and stable housing, these include (but are not limited to):

- Nottinghamshire Healthy Housing Service - Practical home energy improvements to people over 60 and families with young children, at risk from cold-related illness.
- Let's Optimise your Heating Service - Practical advice to low-income households and clinically at-risk groups to upgrade the energy efficiency of their boilers and reduce heating bill costs.
- The Fuel Poverty Project provided by Mid Motts Integrated Care Partnership - Targeting patients at risk of cold related harm and who are likely to be eligible for free or subsidised domestic retrofit measures including home insulation, low carbon heating and renewable energy to cut energy demand and household energy bills.

- Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Safe and Sound Team - Helping adults across Nottinghamshire to stay safe, warm and independent in their own homes. Support includes help with heating problems, boiler replacements, and repairs alongside delivering their Warm Homes programme that targets the most vulnerable and fuel poor older people, providing home energy checks and warmth advice.
- The Citizens Advice Bureau Local Authority Toolkit - Guidance for local authorities and health and third sector partners to work together to reduce fuel poverty in their localities to support fuel poor and vulnerable households.
- Nottinghamshire County Council Winter Health Booklet – A document offering guidance to Nottinghamshire residents promoting staying well & healthy during the winter.
- Nottinghamshire County Council Advice on Keeping Warm - Extra support to keep warm during winter through energy saving measures and advice on the financial support available.

15. Household Heating Tips and Improvements

The government support and local interventions previously mentioned contribute to in part and/or fund many of the below adaptation's helping to keep people warm in their home:

- Insulation:
  - Walls – cavity wall fill, interior or exterior insulation for solid walls (i.e. where no cavity is present).
  - Roof – insulate the loft with rolls of rock wool or similar.
  - Underfloor insulation on the ground floor.
  - Lag hot water tank and hot water pipes and radiators.
- Upgrade single glazed windows and doors to double glazed.
- Draught proofing - e.g., chimney baffles, floorboards, loft hatches, sealing gaps around windows, doors & skirting boards.
- Service heating systems annually.
- Replace an old inefficient boiler with a new efficient system, preferably an air source heat pump.
- Bleed radiators.
- Heating & boiler controls – e.g., programmers, room thermostats, thermostatic radiator valves.

Government grants and support can be dependent on personal circumstance, for example, household income or disability status, however services such as the Nottinghamshire Energy Partnership can support with signposting individuals to any support which they may be eligible for.

What should we do next?

16. Recommendations for Consideration

	Recommendation	Lead(s)
	Service Delivery	
1	Target interventions. Ashfield, Mansfield, and Bassetlaw areas are highlighted as having a higher proportion of households experiencing fuel poverty in Nottinghamshire. The highlighted Middle Super Output Areas within each district should be further targeted through national and local interventions and improvements. The energy efficiency of a household is one of the three main fuel poverty drivers. Local intelligence highlights that many households in Nottinghamshire have poor energy efficiency. Interventions should target the areas highlighted.	District and Borough Councils and Nottinghamshire County Council.
	Insight	
2	Housing stock conditions survey. Gathering insight into the housing stock conditions of private sector housing in Nottinghamshire would allow fuel poor households living in non-decent conditions to be identified and further supported through national and local interventions and improvements.	District and Borough Councils and Nottinghamshire County Council.

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