



**DWP MODERNISING SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING GREEN PAPER  
CONSULTATION  
END FUEL POVERTY COALITION RESPONSE  
22 July 2024**

The End Fuel Poverty Coalition is a [broad coalition of more than 70 anti-poverty, health, housing and environmental campaigners, charities, local authorities, trade unions and consumer organisations](#). It is also supported by academics, social enterprises and those working on the front line of fighting fuel poverty.

We share the concerns of many others in the sector around the proposed reforms and believe the consultation should be halted and a new positive vision developed for the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), which is conducted in partnership with disabled people.

It is clear that every aspect of the PIP application, decision-making and appeals process requires improvement and our members are concerned that many of the proposals outlined in this green paper fail to correctly identify or meaningfully engage with the serious issues that people with disabilities often face.

**Many of our members have already responded individually to the consultation and the wider End Fuel Poverty Coalition membership wish to add their support to the views put forward by the likes of Mencap, Scope and Sense.**

Briefly looking at the issue of disability and energy poverty, we would like to formally place on record our view that if the Government advances these proposals it must complete a full impact assessment to show how they will affect disabled people - this should be done now at the green paper stage, rather than waiting until the final consultation.

We would urge the team to set out clearly if any proposals taken forward from the Green Paper stage have implications for energy support, especially the Warm Home Discount and Cold Weather Payment. Any loss of this support will come as a further blow to already struggling fuel poor households.

Not only are energy bills expected to remain high until 2025, but prices will continue to be volatile in the longer term, according to analysts and the energy regulator. [1]

Yet people with disabilities often use more energy for essential mobility, health and sensory needs.

Too many are being left in fuel poverty, with nearly [40% of people](#) who responded to a Mencap survey saying they had kept their heating off last winter despite being cold. Over a quarter said they avoided switching lights on to save money.

We also know that many disabled households are in energy debt and for them, the ongoing energy costs crisis is heightening the risks they face:

- 21% of people with a disability or long term illness and who are in energy debt have turned to illegal money lenders (18% of those in debt more generally)
- 52% of people with a disability or long term illness and who are in energy debt have cut back on hot meals (43% of those in debt more generally)
- 74% of people with a disability or long term illness and who are in energy debt say the debt has caused emotional distress (67% of those in debt more generally). [2]

So not only must PIP work for disabled people, but the DWP should also ensure it supports calls to the Treasury and Energy ministers to reform Britain's broken energy system.

Actions new Ministers must urgently consider include:

**PROTECT VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS** – Consult on a [social tariff](#), but in the short-term introduce a more comprehensive warm homes discount for vulnerable households so that fewer people have to choose between [heating and eating](#).

**REDUCE DEBT** – Introduce a Help to Repay scheme to offer a lifeline to millions of people who are trapped in [energy debt](#) through no fault of their own, and ban energy companies from selling debts on to debt collectors.

**METERS** – Ban the forced installation of [prepayment meters](#) for good and require suppliers to fix broken smart meters so that consumers are only ever charged for what they use.

**INSULATION** – Invest in insulating our leaky housing stock so that vulnerable people do not have to spend yet another winter shivering in [cold, damp](#), and often dangerously mouldy homes.

**STANDING CHARGES** – Reduce electricity and gas [Standing Charges](#) to bring down energy bills for everyone ahead of the next price cap change in October and consult on a social tariff so that vulnerable high-users are not unfairly penalised.

### **About the End Fuel Poverty Coalition**

The End Fuel Poverty Coalition is a [broad coalition of more than 70 anti-poverty, health, housing and environmental campaigners, charities, local authorities, trade unions and consumer organisations](#). It is also supported by academics, social enterprises and those working on the front line of fighting fuel poverty.

We believe that everybody has the right to a warm, dry home that they can afford to heat and power.

Members of the Coalition include: [Action with Communities in Rural England](#), [ACE Research](#), [Advice for Renters](#), [AgeUK](#), [All Birmingham's Children](#), [Austerity Action Group](#), [Association of Green Councillors](#), [Association of Local Energy Officers](#), [Association for Decentralised Energy](#), [Asthma + Lung UK](#), [Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council](#), [Beat the Cold](#), [Brighton & Hove City Council](#), Bruton Town Council, [Camden Federation of Private Tenants](#), [Child Poverty Action Group](#), Church Poverty Action, [Chartered Institute of Environmental Health](#), [Chartered Institute of Housing](#), [Community Action Northumberland](#),

[Centre for Sustainable Energy](#), [Climate Action Network West Midlands](#), [Debt Justice](#), Disability Poverty Campaign Group, [Disability Rights UK](#), [E3G](#), EBICO, [End Child Poverty Coalition](#), [Energy Saving Trust](#), Energy Cities, Fair Energy Campaign, [Epilepsy Action](#), [Fair By Design](#), [Foster Support](#), [Friends of the Earth](#), [Fuel Poverty Action](#), Fuel Poverty Research Network, [Generation Rent](#), [Good Law Project](#), Greenpeace, [Groundwork](#), Hackney Foodbank, [Heat Trust](#), Home Start Oxford, [Independent Age](#), [Inner City Life](#), [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#), [Lambeth Pensioners Action Group](#), [London Borough of Camden](#), London Borough of Lewisham, Marie Curie, [Mayor of London](#), Moorland Climate Action, [National Pensioners Convention](#), National Union of Students / [Students Organising for Sustainability](#), NCB, [National Energy Action](#), [New Economics Foundation](#), National Federation of Women's Institutes, [Northern Health Services Alliance](#), [Oxford City Council](#), [Positive Money Tower Hamlets](#), Redcar & Cleveland Council, [Repowering London](#), Retrofit Bruton, Right To Energy Coalition, [Rossendale Valley Energy](#), [Ryecroft Community Hub](#), [Save the Children](#), [Sense](#), [Scope](#), [Shaping Our Lives](#), [Social Workers Union](#), [South East London Community Energy](#), [Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations](#), [South West London Law Centres](#), [Stonewater Housing Association](#), [Stop The Squeeze](#), Uplift, [UNISON](#), Warm & Well North Yorkshire, [Warm & Well in Merton](#), [Young Lives vs Cancer](#).

The coordination for the [End Fuel Poverty Coalition](#) is provided by social enterprise [Campaign Collective](#) and the Coalition is also part of the [Warm This Winter](#) campaign. In Scotland we work closely with [Energy Action Scotland](#). In Wales, we work with [Climate Cymru's Warm This Winter](#) activity and in Northern Ireland with the NEA-backed [Fuel Poverty NI coalition](#).

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[1]

<https://www.endfuelpoverty.org.uk/customers-out-of-pocket-due-to-britains-broken-energy-system/>

[2] Sample of disabled households conducted as part of this research project:

<https://www.endfuelpoverty.org.uk/call-to-end-the-punishment-of-energy-debt/>