



Fuel Poverty Indicator

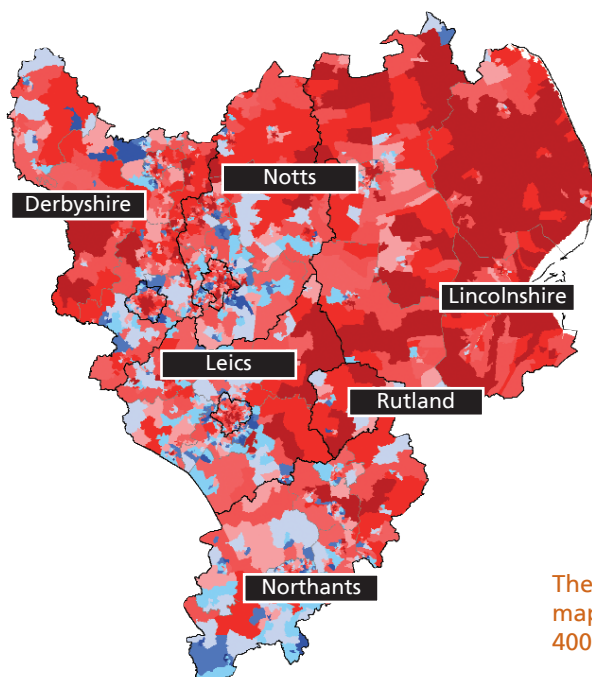
Predicting fuel poverty at the local level

The Fuel Poverty Indicator is a powerful tool for informing policy, targeting programmes and aiding research

The ability to target households suffering fuel poverty is vital to meeting the Government's objective of eliminating fuel poverty in England. The Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and University of Bristol have produced a new fuel poverty indicator (FPI) to predict the incidence of fuel poverty in small areas across England.

The new FPI has updated and improved the research for the original FPI (also carried out by CSE and the University of Bristol), with funding from the DTI, DoH, Eaga Partnership Charitable Trust, Energy Retail Association and Ofgem. The new FPI uses modelled data from three sources:

- 1) the 2001 Census;
- 2) the 2003 English House Condition Survey (EHCS);
- 3) property database, RESIDATA.



The new FPI will enable policy makers and programme managers to target resources at areas most in need by showing how the incidence of fuel poverty, as identified by the EHCS, is distributed across the country.

Fuel Poverty Indicator website

A dedicated website (www.cse.org.uk/fuelpovertyindicator) displays FPI maps and data for every county in England. The maps show the incidence of fuel poverty at Lower Super Output Area level (LSOA). LSOAs typically contain about 400 households. The website, which is free to all users, also provides FPI data according to different definitions of fuel poverty, guidance on how to interpret the FPI and some suggestions for how the FPI might be used.

Using the Fuel Poverty Indicator

The FPI is a versatile and powerful tool that can be used for the following:

- Informing the targeting of fuel poverty programmes
- Informing the development of local affordable warmth strategies
- Raising awareness of fuel poverty as an issue for concern (the maps are particularly useful in this respect)
- Supporting funding bids for projects to combat fuel poverty
- Helping make sure grant programmes and other fuel poverty resources are reaching areas with high levels of fuel poverty
- Informing research, e.g. exploring the relationship between fuel poverty and health inequalities, other health indicators and deprivation indicators.

The Fuel Poverty Indicator can generate region or county-specific maps showing the likely incidence of fuel poverty in small (approx 400-household) areas

Who will find the FPI useful?

- Central Government
- Local authorities
- Energy regulator
- Energy consumer representatives
- Energy suppliers
- Energy efficiency advice centres
- Primary Care Trusts
- Public health bodies
- Registered Social Landlords
- Others working to combat fuel poverty

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The FPI research

The FPI is based on a complex statistical model developed by the University of Bristol. In brief, data from the 2003 English House Condition Survey (EHCS) and property database RESIDATA was used to predict the risk of fuel poverty for different household types. The weighted model was then applied to the 2001 Census to provide a fuel poverty estimate for individual geographical areas.

The FPI model can be applied to all Census geographies, e.g. district, ward, Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), Output Area. The website provides maps and data at LSOA level to allow detailed analysis of fuel poverty within individual areas. The maps use the 'full income' definition of fuel poverty. FPI data on three alternative definitions of fuel poverty is also available on the website.

More information about the FPI methodology and the different fuel poverty definitions is given in the full report of the research, available on the FPI

What is fuel poverty?

Fuel poverty occurs when a household needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain satisfactory heating and other energy services. ■ In 2004 there were around 1.2m households in fuel poverty in England, according to official figures. However, the Government estimates that fuel poverty doubled between 2004 and 2006, due to the rise in fuel prices over this period. ■ The consequences of fuel poverty include cold, damp homes; reduced quality of life; poor health and debts.

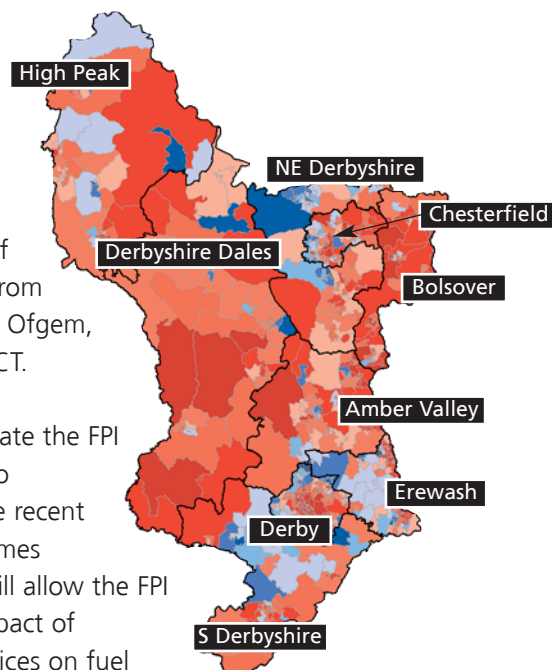


website. The FPI research was overseen and approved by a steering group of representatives from DTI, Defra, DoH, Ofgem, ERA and Eaga PCT.

We hope to update the FPI model, subject to funding, as more recent EHCS data becomes available. This will allow the FPI to reflect the impact of changing fuel prices on fuel poverty levels. We will provide information on the website in the future about possible updates and the likely frequency of updates (e.g. annual, biannual).

www.cse.org.uk/fuelpovertyindicator

CSE welcomes feedback from users of the Fuel Poverty Indicator. Please contact william.baker@cse.org.uk



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