



# National Energy Action

**IMPACT REPORT**  
APRIL 2021 TO MARCH 2022



*Action for Warm Homes*

# Message from National Energy Action Chief Executive, Adam Scorer

“It has been the most extraordinary year. Sadly, a year that has exposed millions more households to the awful experience of living with fuel poverty. But we must believe, also a year that has raised the urgency and severity of the fuel poverty challenge with policymakers.”

National Energy Action’s mission is that ‘everyone should be able to afford to keep their homes warm and safe’. The combination of low incomes, high bills and inefficient housing conspire to make millions of homes places of misery and despair rather than comfort and happiness.

We have experienced both the worst pandemic and the worst cost-of-living crisis in most people’s memories. The cost of heating an average home has doubled in 18 months. After the 1 April price cap rise, over 6.5million UK households were in fuel poverty, and the 1 October price cap rise later this year, will see worse still to come.

Under these conditions there is no silver bullet and no one organisation can do everything, but I am humbled and proud beyond words at what NEA staff have achieved over the past year.

A crisis is when the things that we rely on to get through challenges no longer work or are no longer available.

That is when charities like NEA are most needed; to help people avoid self-disconnecting, getting more money into their pockets, helping them manage their debts and giving them vital advice and support. We have helped more people than ever before.

## Scale of the challenge

With challenges of this scale, our advice and support are simply not enough. So, every day we have made the argument for more direct intervention from governments, better protections from regulators, more action from the industry. You do not get everything you work for, but you certainly have to work for everything that you get.

We have tried to be a voice for people in fuel poverty in the media, in partnerships and across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We have built our membership and brought more people into our events. Everything we do is in partnership with others. Every success and every challenge is shared.

“We have tried to be a voice for people in fuel poverty in the media, in partnerships and across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.”

I am immensely grateful to everyone who has supported us financially. The most rewarding, and frankly overwhelming, has been the support of the general public who have made donations, sent us messages of thanks, promised to look out for neighbours and friends and joined our campaigns for change.

The winter coming will be the single biggest challenge that NEA, and our friends in other organisations committed to the fight against fuel poverty, will have experienced. Our support to households, our advocacy and our partnerships will be ever more important.

We owe it to the people who will have gone through such hardship, stress and desperation to make sure that this is the last year when inaction and inattention to low incomes, high bills and poor energy efficiency condemns millions of people to endure cold, unsafe and unhealthy homes.”



“I am humbled and proud beyond words at what NEA staff have achieved over the past year.”



# How National Energy Action has helped

Our Warm and Safe Homes Advice line operates across England and Wales and supports thousands of people each year with energy and income maximisation advice and information. Our team of dedicated advisers consistently goes above and beyond to make a difference. They offer support across a wide range of issues including energy efficiency, priority services, smart metering, complaints, billing issues, energy debt, grants and rebates, income maximisation and much more – all to help improve the lives of the people we support.

Our triage team handled over **13,500 calls** into our phone lines from people who are struggling to keep their home warm, whether that's due to high energy costs, energy debt, low income or poor housing. The team taking the calls provides an initial assessment of the clients' enquiries and then direct them to the best form of support, whether that's an internal caseworker or an external specialist organisation.

In 2021/22 our **specialist benefits team** supported **1,924** clients with entitlement checks, with **977** of them being supported through the claims process. The team secured over **£3.47 million** in confirmed additional income, with a further **£565,192** in claims outstanding to be confirmed.

These increases in annual income are life-changing, helping offset a loss or reduction in income after unemployment, bereavement or an increase in costs due to a health diagnosis. With an average increase of **£3,400 per annum**, this money will go some way to offsetting the increased costs of living.

Our energy advice team worked on **10,137** cases for our clients, supporting over **7,700** people with energy information and advice, **6,587** households were helped through one-to-one casework, and **906** people through group events. We **helped clients access £392,697 in crisis support**, hardship funds and debt relief payments, keeping people on supply and taking away the stress and burden of unmanageable debt repayments.



This crisis support also gives clients some breathing space to resolve their energy or debt issues.

We installed over **£2million** of heating and insulation measures, making long-term changes to people's homes and ultimately helping to take people out of fuel poverty.

As well as crisis support and financial support for energy efficiency measures, NEA estimated it secured in excess of **£225,000** of energy-specific gains through Warm Home Discount rebates, compensation payments, water and energy tariff reductions and erroneous billing write-offs.

## Innovation and Technical Evaluation

- NEA is committed to ensuring a fair transition to net zero. Decarbonising our heating systems gives us huge opportunity to achieve warmer, safer homes but only if delivered in a coordinated way with people, not just buildings, at the heart of the transition. The Innovation and Technical Evaluation team works with partners who are committed to maintaining a focus on achieving affordable warmth through innovation and retrofit.
- The team has been working hard after emerging from the pandemic, catching up on delayed fieldwork and on-site monitoring. We finished the year delivering 17 projects in the capacity of evaluation and engagement partner.
- Two flagship innovation projects involving Boxergy and multiple PV monitors have completed installations of measures – despite significant supply chain challenges, and the monitoring and evaluation will be completed in December 2022. Another two projects have completed the fieldwork elements and analysis and write-up continues into mid-2022, namely the evaluation of Gentoo Groups "Core364" project involving the installation of 364 ground source heat pumps in Sunderland, and the BEIS-funded Electrification of Heat project in the north-east with partner Eon.

Over **£3.47 million** in confirmed additional income

- Two other significant pieces of work include writing the Decarbonisation of Homes course (see Training on page 12 to 13). The team also developed support materials to support the National Union of Students project.

## Smart meter rollout

Since 2014 NEA has actively campaigned to ensure nobody is left behind in the smart meter rollout. In 2016 we partnered with Smart Energy GB on the Smart Energy GB in Communities programme to fulfil this ambition. The programme is part of their campaign to inform and inspire people about smart meters and the benefits they can bring. The programme partners with organisations from the voluntary and public sectors. This means we're able to work with trusted, expert organisations across the country to help reach people who might otherwise miss out on information about what smart metering means for them and how they can benefit. In 2021 Smart Energy GB in Communities awarded **35 grants** to local partners totalling around **£576,000**. And in 2022 they awarded **39 grants** to partners working with people on a low income, over 65 or carers. The value of the 2022 grants programme is around **£675,000**.



## National Energy Action has had a significant impact on people's lives:

“The mood and morale booster from our conversations still makes all the difference to this day. Instead of feeling alone and overwhelmed by a minefield of paperwork, there was someone who understood and cared.”

“This winter my two-year-old son has not got an infection at all.”

“If it weren't for this service, my husband and I would have been cold, hungry and in arrears with our mortgage. I had no idea how to get any help or benefits, thank you very, very much for all your help and support.”

“My adviser is brilliant. She's really good. She explains it really well. She takes the time, so she actually listens to what you say rather than talking over the top of you. I think she's fantastic.”

# Policy and advocacy

The energy crisis means millions of people living in fuel poverty now need a louder voice.

The cost of heating an average home has doubled in 18 months from September 2021 to March 2022

6.5 million households across the UK are now living in fuel poverty

National Energy Action (NEA) has aimed to respond to these unprecedented challenges by being a more powerful voice for further action to protect the poorest households and, where possible, conveying their own direct experiences of the energy crisis.

Overall, we have aimed to increase our engagement with industry, policymakers and the media to highlight the need for a proportionate response to the crisis. We have worked with our delivery teams and the charity's supporters to raise awareness of the current support available and capture where there are key gaps. As a result, we have continued to influence key policy announcements.

## Our focus

- Combating the impact of the pandemic and energy crisis for the poorest households across the UK
- Highlighting the risk of increased debt and self-disconnection for households using prepayment meters
- Extending and expanding the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Warm Home Discount (WHD)
- Prompting the UK Government and other nations across the UK to develop and invest in their own domestic energy efficiency schemes
- Ensured more support for vulnerable customers within network price controls compared to previous periods
- Prompted an affordability review for water and the development of a consistent social tariff in the water sector
- Prompted a commitment to update the fuel poverty strategy for Northern Ireland – making sure all four nations have updated government commitments to take strategic action on fuel poverty
- Prompted and directly inputted into the Welsh Government's Cold Weather Resilience Plan and wider national public health guidance on the links between Covid-19, cold homes and health
- Ensured there is additional crisis support for local authorities and the devolved nations to support people who are struggling to afford essential goods and services, including energy and food.
- We campaigned for the UK Government to spend more resources to increase the energy efficiency of fuel poor homes, resulting in more than £1bn in additional funding for fuel poverty schemes in England.



Following the pandemic, National Energy Action (NEA) has also now reconvened the Westminster All Party Parliamentary Group for Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty and the Welsh Senedd's Cross Party Group on Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency, providing additional mechanisms to build momentum and consensus on the campaign to end cold homes. In Northern Ireland, we have developed our top 10 recommendations for politicians to help tackle fuel poverty and the Energy Crisis in Northern Ireland. We were also able to reconvene the Fuel Poverty Coalition Cymru of which NEA plays a major role.

April 2022 saw the energy price cap soar by 54%, following a period of relentless increases in wholesale gas prices. This meant that anyone reliant on a standard variable or default tariff or coming to the end of their fixed term will have seen a huge increase in their energy bills. NEA estimates that another 2 million households were tipped into fuel poverty by this unprecedented crisis. Despite welcoming the support the UK Government has now made available, NEA has been clear where further additional support is desperately needed to combat the energy crisis. NEA also continues to urge Ofgem to work with the UK Government and industry to better support vulnerable customers as we approach this coming winter.

As well as challenging the UK Government and GB regulator, NEA has helped to influence opposition parties' own proposals to combat the impact of the energy crisis, resulting in major UK political parties across the nations coming forward with their own

plans to reduce the impact of the energy crisis on the poorest households. NEA has worked particularly hard to influence how those in Northern Ireland and Wales have responded to the crisis in their countries. This has resulted in new and enhanced protections for low-income and vulnerable consumers who are now better able to access additional crisis support.

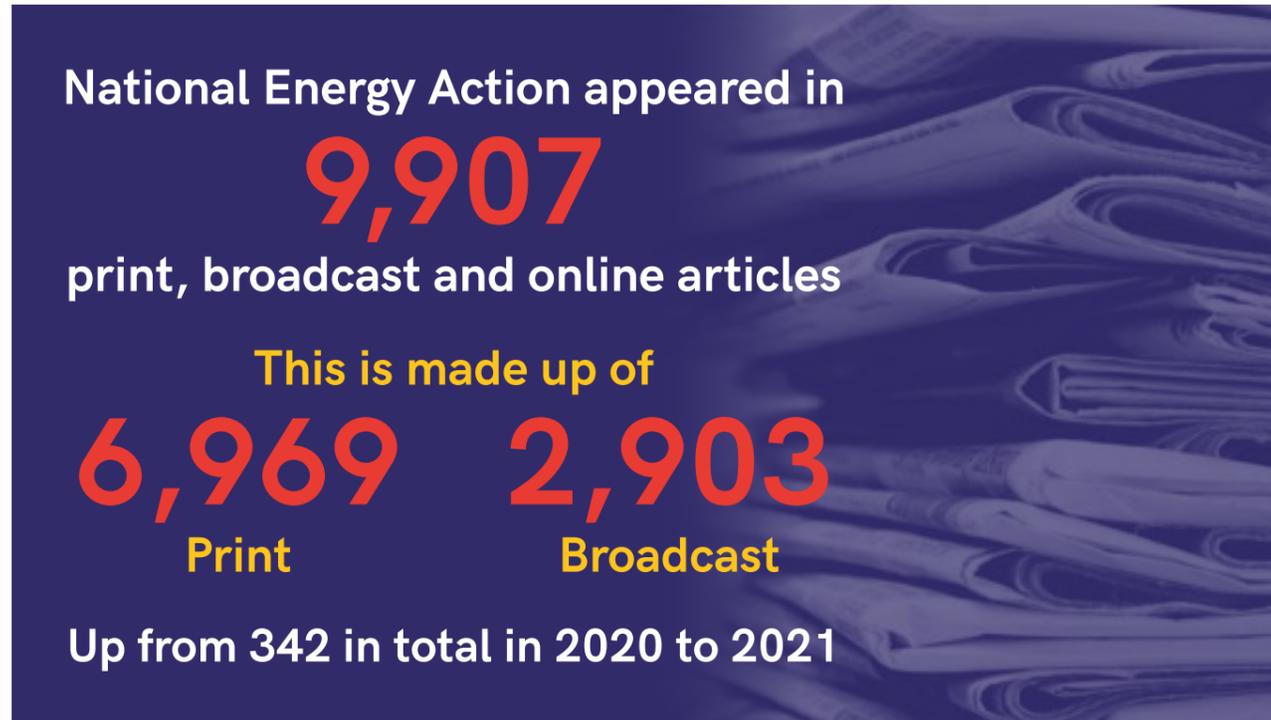
Finally, NEA continues to push for this to be a decade of delivery, putting an end to needless energy waste in our homes. Improved energy efficiency is more vital now than ever and is a significant opportunity to address the cost-of-living crisis. However, progress towards key improvement continues to stall. The latest fuel poverty statistics show that the 2020 fuel poverty milestone, for all fuel poor households in England to reach EPC E by 2020, has been missed by a significant amount. There are still 191,000 fuel poor households living in the worst properties, paying over £1000 per year more than they would be if they had been upgraded to a reasonable standard of energy efficiency already.

Unless addressed, the lack of progress in decarbonising fuel poor homes will continue to put the delivery of the UK Government's legally binding fuel poverty commitments at risk, add to the cost-of-living pressures which expose millions of low-income households to future energy crises and undermine the UK Government's aim to reach net zero.

In the year ahead we will turn up the volume. We will help millions of people living in fuel poverty have a louder voice.

# Mainstream media impact

It is crucial that we keep issues and people's experiences in the public eye. An important part of our growing media coverage has been our formalised system of obtaining case studies for journalists covering fuel poverty.



We now have a growing case study database. Our case studies were featured on *Newsnight*, the *Fuel Poverty Awareness Day BBC* report (which led to our case study receiving donations from members of the public), *Express*, *The Sun* savers section, *Mirror*, *Bloomberg* and *Tribune Magazine*.

Our coverage included the announcement of the price cap rise in October 2021, which resulted in 154 articles and media appearances including the *Evening Standard* (front page story), the *Daily Mail*, the *Sun*, the *Mirror*, the *Telegraph*, the *Times*, among others.

We continued this momentum into November by appearing on *BBC Breakfast* and our statement that the vulnerable were being 'left out in the cold' being the top story on BBC online on the day of the Budget, as well as appearing in numerous outlets including the *Mirror* and *Metro*.

We obtained extensive coverage on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day on 3 December 2021, starting with an exclusive on the *BBC* featuring our case study Sandy who said, "My teenager covers himself in coats to keep warm." The day itself was mentioned in 425 articles including *BBC Breakfast*, *BBC Online*, *Mail*, *Telegraph* and *Times*.

Over Christmas and New Year, we released exclusive data to the *Guardian*, revealing how many households and children would be in fuel poverty. This led to 107 outlets covering the story and an increase in coverage by 50% month on month.

The announcement in January that money expert *Martin Lewis* was donating £100,000 to National Energy Action led to over 30 media articles and the price cap rise announcement in February 2022, led to 1,797 media articles and 32 broadcast appearances that month.

In the week before the price cap rise took effect, the last week of March, we ensured the story was top of the news agenda with over 700 stories including an exclusive with Adam appearing on *Channel 4 News* on 31 March.

# Events

National Energy Action (NEA) has run several events, ranging from local and regional workshops to conferences and national awareness weeks.

In Coventry, National Energy Action's (NEA) HEAT team (funded by Scottish Power), which delivers local telephone advice, home visits and awareness raising sessions, celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2021. It delivers solutions to the multiple energy-related problems faced by clients in the area in a tailored, in-depth, and community-focused way. The team has frequently been recognised for its work, and in 2021 received the Energy Efficiency Award for Regional (West Midlands) Vulnerable Customer Support Campaigner of the Year.

Warm Homes Week in September 2021 saw 2,545 registrations and 828 unique logins across 17 live sessions. There were 23 hours of live content with 46 contributors. A total of 649 organisations were represented. The priority for conference was to highlight the challenges this coming winter. Sessions included

expert speakers from NEA, BEIS, Energy UK, Citizens Advice and Money Advice Trust speaking about the difficulties facing both vulnerable customers and energy suppliers this winter, as both face the strain of higher wholesale gas prices. We had addresses by Lord Callanan and deputy mayor of London Shirley Rodrigues.

Our Utilita-supported conference on 25 January had to revert from in-person to online after a spike in Covid cases and restrictions. The focus was on support guaranteed for the most vulnerable.

We held our first question and answer session with parenting website Mumsnet on 23 February, from both an advice and policy perspective. There were 41 questions in the hour and the page received over 3,500 page views. Mumsnet has 8 million unique users every month and threads never expire so we have our links on their site forever, which is a great SEO boost for us. Furthering our digital reach, Matt Copeland appeared on the *Daily Mirror's* Facebook Live on Thursday 25 February, answering questions and we appeared on Ed Miliband's podcast "Reasons to be Cheerful".

The fundraising team's Nation's Biggest Housewarming gained 6,257 impressions on Twitter, 1,898 reach on Facebook, 696 on LinkedIn and 113 on Instagram.



# Social media impact

Since September 2021, we have focused attention on our social media channels. The biggest success was Fuel Poverty Awareness Day on 3 December 2021 when we were trending fourth on Twitter in the UK entirely organically, without payment.

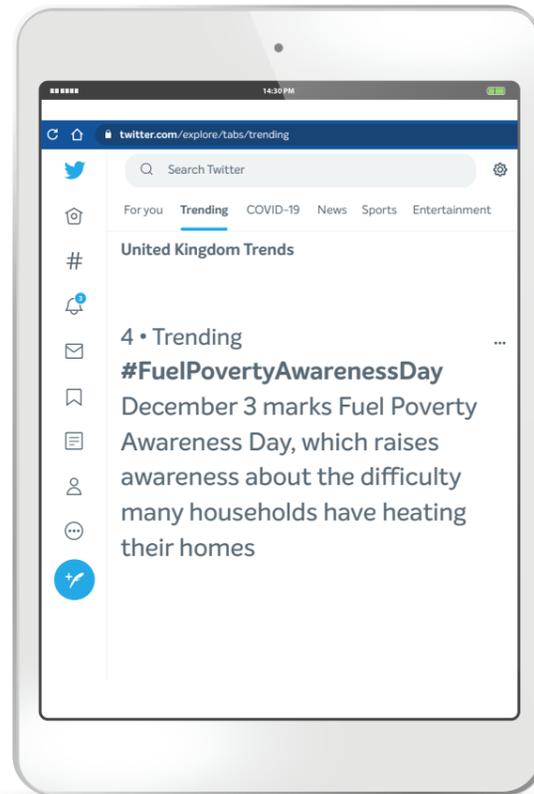
The hashtag was mentioned nearly **2,000** times (up from over **700** in 2020 to 2021). London Mayor Sadiq Khan, Shadow Climate Change and Net Zero Secretary Ed Miliband, as well as the Green Party and Citizens Advice accounts, MPs, other organisations and members of the public all got involved, achieving a total reach of **8.98** million.

We also promoted the campaign on Facebook, leading to a **53%** increase in page views and Instagram, leading to an **11.3%** increase in followers and reaching **73.9%** more accounts than the previous month.

We began hosting 'Warm Welcome' project sessions, targeting new and expectant parents using Instagram Live and have now held four, reaching around **50** new participants.

Our biggest months for new followers and engagement were January, adding over **150** followers in one day after Martin Lewis' announcement, and March, adding over **200** as the price cap rise loomed large.

We have also improved our website, optimising all pages and leading to **117,350** users across 2021 to 2022, with **491,569** page views. We now average around **14,000** unique users a month. On our best performing day, we had **2,142** users in one day. Our search results now pull in our Twitter feed and contact information. We're now first on Google and other search engines for the search terms National Energy Action, NEA, and fuel poverty charity and second for energy crisis.



# Research

The Research team led/authored the following reports:

**THE HANDIHEAT PROJECT** – Low-carbon technology and rural energy poverty: A review of policy and practice in the NPA and EU (May 2021)

**Warm Homes Fund Programme Evaluation** – interim report 2 (May 2021) and public-facing abridged version (September 2021)

**Hard-to-Reach Energy Users Sub-task 2** – Case Study Analysis United Kingdom. Produced for IEA Technology Collaboration Programme (October 2021)

**Barnsley Warm Homes and Hospital Discharge Service** – Final Evaluation report (November 2021)

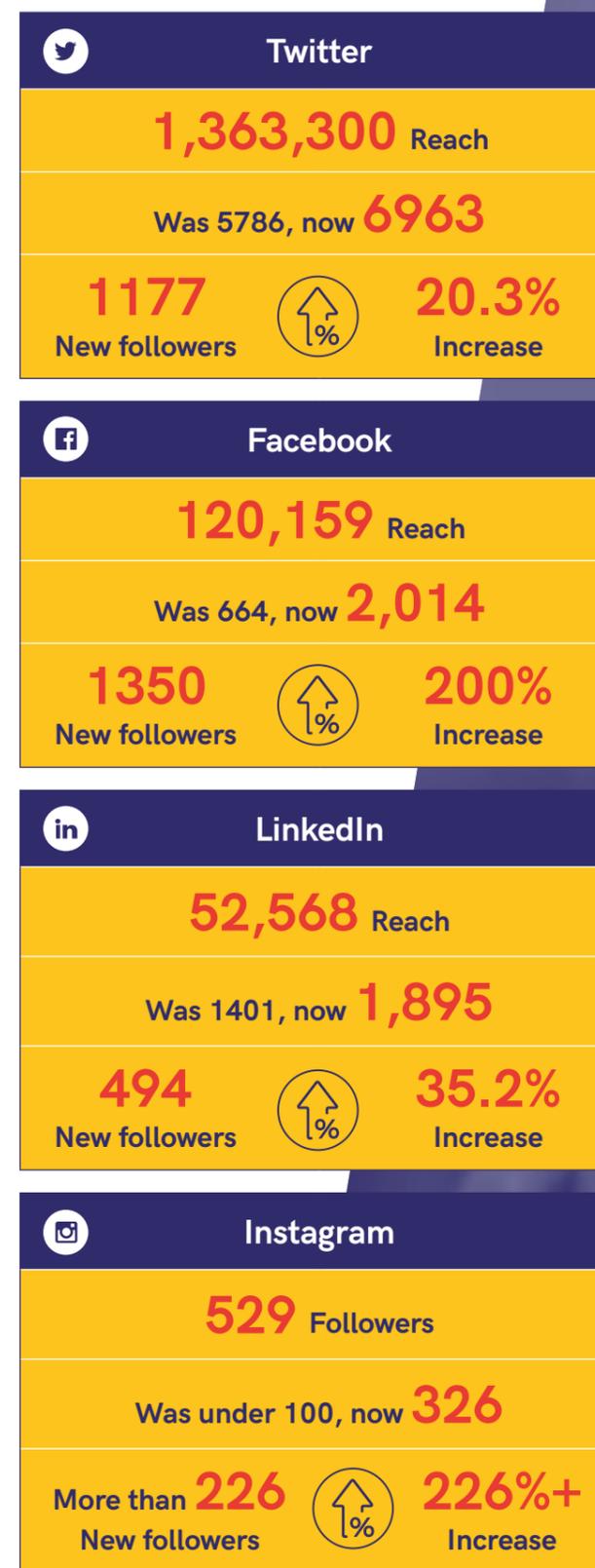
**East Riding of Yorkshire Warm Homes Fund** – Final Evaluation report (January 2022)

**Warm Home Discount Industry Initiatives** – An impact evaluation of the NEA-Cross Supplier Initiative in SY11 ( March 2022)

Research Team contributed to the following projects:

**Fuel Poverty Monitor** (November 2022)

**Maximising the smart meter rollout for prepayment customers for Smart Energy UK** (June 2021)



# Water

National Energy Action responded to six industry consultations in total this year, including Ofwat’s consultation ‘PR24 and beyond: Creating tomorrow, together’, Ofwat’s Payment, help and debt guidelines consultation and Waterwise’s water efficiency strategy consultation, as well as a consultation on a new strategic policy statement for Ofwat.

Our design sprint, ‘Tip Top Tariffs: Water Your Way’, involved 26 participants from 16 organisations joining us throughout the week. We generated 22 ideas, three of which were prototyped. The outcomes of the sprint have been written up in a summary paper, which were shared with Ofwat for further discussion.

The water bill price rise has been covered through various mediums, including: **NEA briefing paper on the price rises** (published on 4 February, and shared with Defra, Ofwat and CCW), in The Guardian (4 February) and Observer.

We were also featured on the **Future Leaders podcast**, with an NEA colleague and the CEO of Hope Energy, supported by IE Hub (9 February).

We supported the launch of the CCW Water Affordability Review on 26 May, with extensive social media coverage, press release, and blog. Since publication of this review, we have been actively

involved in the ongoing work to develop a single social tariff, working with Government, Ofwat and water companies to deliver a fair and consistent support scheme for customers.

Our Coping Tactics YouGov poll to understand how far people in water poverty go, was featured in The Mirror, The Water Report, and Utility Week. We also published a blog on the outcomes <https://www.nea.org.uk/news/water-poverty-struggling-to-cope-orjust-coping-with-the-struggle>.

The APPWG session on water affordability took place on 28 October, with the following speakers: Adam Scorer, NEA; Claire Sharp, NWL; Emma Clancy, CCW; Peter Tutton, StepChange; and Sue Lindsay, Wessex Water. The session was chaired by Liz Twist MP, and Baroness Macintosh.

We shared the proposal for a joint water and energy efficiency training package with Waterwise at the Water & Energy Task & Finish Group (26 January).

We were successfully awarded funding from the Ofwat Water Breakthrough Challenge for our Fairwater project, in partnership with Northumbrian Water, Northern Gas Networks, Newcastle University and Procter & Gamble. The project, which spans four years, will help us better understand the availability and effectiveness of retrofit solutions for energy and water efficiency, and allow us to design ‘customer transition pathways’ which will indicate the most effective route for households to engage with net zero based on their individual circumstances and characteristics.

## National Energy Action also spoke at several events including:

- Utility Week Consumer Vulnerability and Debt Conference (15 September)
- NEA Warm Homes Week (29 September)
- Sia Partners/King Baudoin Foundation, Belgium (4 October)
- Energy Networks Innovation Conference (13 October)
- Social Policy Workshops (water poverty lead) (19 and 30 November)
- South East Water Vulnerability Network (29 and 30 November)
- Money Advice Liaison Group (MALG) North East and Yorkshire members meeting (16 December)
- NEA Support Guaranteed Conference (25 January)
- MALG national members meeting (3 February)
- CCW England Committee Meeting (18 February)
- MALG Midlands meeting (9 March)
- Waterwise Conference (session chair – water efficiency and climate justice) (23 March)

# Training

National Energy Action is one of the leading providers of domestic energy-related training and education services across the United Kingdom and our qualifications are widely recognised as the benchmark for delivering energy efficiency, fuel debt and fuel poverty advice and support.

Our mission is to reach as many people as possible to increase their knowledge when it comes to identifying people who might be vulnerable or struggling to keep warm, and enable them to offer guidance and support on a person’s options and where to go for help. With millions of people in fuel poverty we want to increase the number of decision-makers and community champions so everyone can access accurate, good quality advice and information.

Ending fuel poverty is at the heart of everything we do, and with the Government’s ambition to reach net zero by 2050 it is critical that people are taken along this journey with us to achieve a fair transition. We already know that without proper and effective engagement and support, vulnerable householders could be left behind. That’s why we’ve recently launched our suite of Level 4 NCFE Decarbonisation qualifications. These help enhance the practical skills and understanding of contractors, advisers and decision-makers so they consider more than just carbon and buildings. It helps them consider the practical implications of decarbonisation on the people living in the homes they are working with to ensure positive outcomes. We have trained 4,780 learners across England, Wales and Northern Ireland with a reported cascaded reach of over 2.3 million people each year. We have adopted a blended learning model. This was always our ambition but was accelerated during the pandemic, making our qualifications more accessible than ever, from Level 1 through to Level 4.

As well as adult learning, NEA also delivers a comprehensive suite of education services, from primary age to school leavers. We know that children and young people will not only be making energy decisions for themselves in the future, but research shows that children will share information with their care givers, influencing choices and behaviours around the home. Due to lockdown our engagement in schools was restricted but we were able to develop a variety of resources including an expansion of our online suite of education resources. Go to [www.nea.org.uk/education](http://www.nea.org.uk/education).

Number of learners to have attended NEA courses

598

Energy Awareness 6281-01

3509

Short introduction level courses

349

Fuel Debt Advice in the Community

324

Decarbonising Homes: Technologies, Impacts and Solutions modules

The proportion of training course delegates who indicated that they have good or excellent knowledge of the subject

Before course

23%

After course

94%

Delegates who expressed that the training has helped or benefited them in their working role

84%

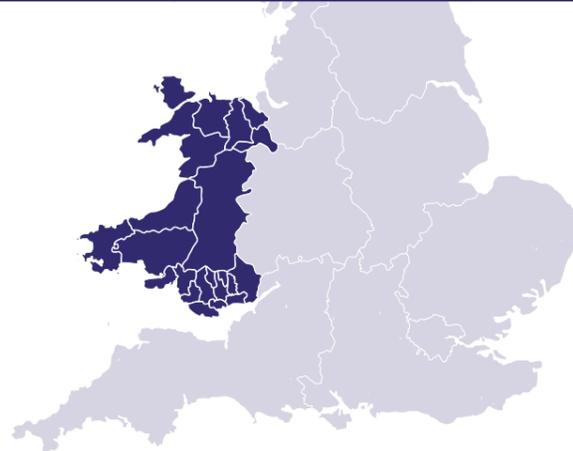
Course attendees who would be likely to recommend NEA training in the future

91%



# Wales

Following the Senedd elections in May 2021, we have engaged closely with Welsh Government ministers and officials, elected representatives, and partners on key concerns around the devastating impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and current energy and cost-of-living crisis, which have seen record numbers of households in Wales fall into fuel poverty – currently up to 45%.



## Working together, we have called for direct, targeted financial support and deeper protection for those most in need, successfully seeing the Welsh Government:

- Deliver a **£38 million** Winter Fuel Support Scheme, providing households claiming working-age, means-tested benefits with a payment towards their energy bills in the winter of 2021 and 2022
- Announce a **£380 million** package of expanded measures to help tackle the cost-of-living crisis, including:
  - A second Winter Fuel Support Scheme payment to be made later this year, expanding eligibility to reach more low-income households in need (including pensioners eligible for Pension Credit)
  - Extending emergency support available via the Discretionary Assistance Fund to help off-gas households in financial hardship top up oil and LPG
- Publish a Cold Weather Resilience Plan, setting out how Welsh Government will work with key stakeholders to proactively safeguard vulnerable and lower-income households during periods of cold weather
- Publicly support many of our calls of the UK Government and Ofgem to take meaningful, concerted and targeted action.

Alongside this, we have engaged closely on the future of the **Welsh Government's Warm Homes Programme**; its key delivery mechanism to help tackle fuel poverty in Wales, improving home energy efficiency for those most in need and supporting a fair, affordable transition. Those on the lowest incomes, living in the least efficient homes, have been hardest hit by soaring energy prices. NEA believes the Programme must focus targeting on lifting households most in need out of fuel poverty, supporting the 'worst-first' via an appropriate, multi-measure, 'fabric-first' approach, with sufficient long-term funding to meet the need in Wales.

We supported the Welsh Government in its consultation exercise, providing a platform for over **100** stakeholders across Wales to share their views and insights, chaired and supported the Fuel Poverty Coalition Cymru to respond to the Minister, and responded directly to the consultation ourselves. We also helped successfully influence the Senedd's Equality and Social Justice Committee to hold a timely inquiry into fuel poverty and the Warm Homes Programme, providing written and oral evidence, which has seen the Committee make some very welcome recommendations.

Throughout the year, we grew NEA's Standard Membership base in Wales by **132%**



## Throughout the year, we:

- Continued to work with the Welsh Government on the implementation of its new *Tackling Fuel Poverty Plan*
- Re-established and expanded the membership of the Cross-Party Group on Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency
- Provided regular platforms for hundreds of partners – including community-facing professionals – to keep abreast of developments, engage with key stakeholders such as Ofgem, and share views and insights via our online Wales Fuel Poverty Forums
- Supported the Welsh Government at its Cost-of-Living Crisis Summit, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' office on its work on Financing the Decarbonisation of Homes in Wales, and actively participated in key external partnerships, events, and advisory panels, amplifying key issues and priorities
- Engaged and deepened relationships with Welsh media including BBC Wales, ITV Wales, BBC Radio Wales, Global Radio, and several print titles.
- Grew NEA's Standard Membership base in Wales by 132%
- Delivered training and national qualifications to record numbers of community-facing workers in Wales – over 500
- Worked with partners to provide direct advice and support to households in need, via our Warm and Safe Homes (WASH) Advice Service.



# Northern Ireland

**2021 was a challenging year for all in the UK but in Northern Ireland there is no price cap which has meant these soaring increases have been incrementally impacting on households here since October 2021.**

The high prevalence of prepayment meters has also meant that the money for the meter needs to be upfront. Additionally, 68% of all households here are reliant on domestic home heating oil, the cost of which has seen a fill of 900 litres rising from £455 in December 21 to £1182 in March 2022.

To highlight these issues, we have worked relentlessly across all media outlets providing over 50 pieces to TV, radio and newsprint. In the period of December to February 2022, we finally secured two targeted emergency interventions from Government totalling £57 million.

We worked across all key agencies and, in particular, worked with the Department for Economy on the 'The Path to Net Zero'; the new energy strategy for Northern Ireland. This strategy commits to establishing a cross-departmental group to develop and deliver options to reduce fuel poverty.

We continued to call on the Department for the Communities for the acceleration of a new Fuel Poverty Strategy and in the interim a Fuel Poverty Taskforce.

We continued to chair the Fuel Poverty Coalition and ahead of the 5 May Northern Ireland Assembly election, we launched our new Fuel Poverty Manifesto for Warmth which was augmented by NEA's 10 Recommendations to Tackle the Energy Crisis in Northern Ireland.

We responded to 10 key consultations to support our aims and continue to maintain and sustain key working partnerships across Government, industry, and the voluntary and community sectors.



Our Northern Exposure and Belfast Warm and Well (BWAU) programme received additional support to our Crisis Fund to support the surge in referrals for financial help. This programme is supported by the Public Health Agency PHA and Belfast City Council and aims to address health inequalities within the city by identifying people at risk of ill health from living in a cold home. The programme provides a single point of coordination referral service and interventions include access to a range of tailored solutions for people living in a cold home. It also raises awareness of the risks of living in a cold home, including the provision of capacity building training for people working within health, community and housing services and to mobilise local networks to refer people to a single point of coordination. Our referrals have doubled and this year we directly managed 350 referrals of which 297 households received single or multiple measures which included gas and electric top-ups, oil fills, provision of oil-filled radiators, boiler repairs, and required technical reports to complete heating system replacements.

**Our training continued to grow and develop as outlined below:**

**City & Guilds - Supported E-learning Online**

**7** courses      **53** participants

**Introduction to Domestic Energy Efficiency (CPD Accredited) Frontline staff training**

**7** sessions      **50** participants

Offered to Housing, Health and Community/Voluntary groups free of charge in Belfast due to support from BCPP and PHA

**Consumer Council Energy Efficiency in the home session**

**27** sessions      **455** participants

**Other Energy Efficiency information sessions to householders**

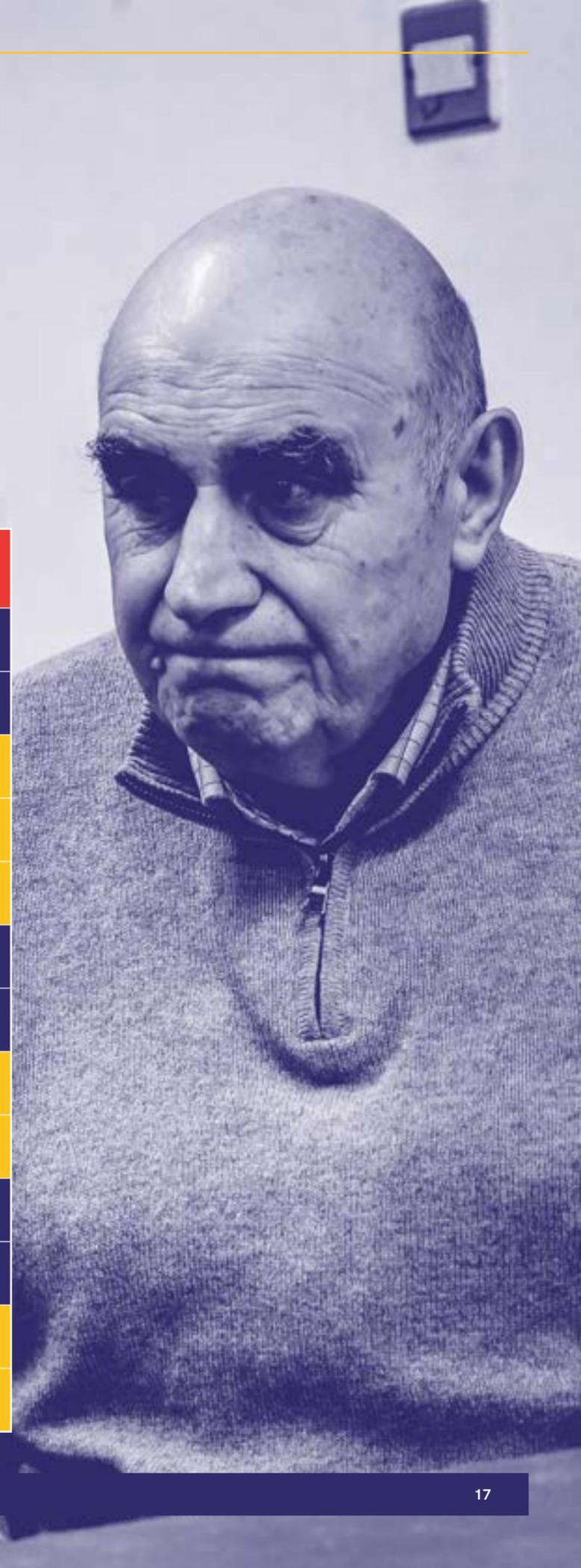
**9** sessions      **82** participants

**EE to frontline staff - NI Social Work Leadership Network**

**2** sessions      **69** participants

**NIFHA - Staff from various housing associations**

**15** participants



## Contact us:

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*Action for Warm Homes*