**INVITATION: A new Fuel Poverty Strategy and Fuel Poverty Scheme**

 **Pre-consultation engagement**

A new Fuel Poverty Strategy is being developed to provide an all-of-government framework for addressing fuel poverty and its impacts in Northern Ireland. This reflects commitments in the [draft Housing Supply Strategy](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/new-housing-supply-strategy) as well as the Executive’s [Energy Strategy for Northern Ireland](https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/energy-strategy-path-net-zero-energy). The new Strategy will recognise our responsibilities under the [Climate Change Act (NI) 2022](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2022/31/contents/enacted) and focus on ensuring a Just Transition for the residential sector. Simultaneously the Department of Communities is developing a successor to the Affordable Warmth Scheme to ensure that home energy support is available for low-income households for the future.

We are now beginning a period of intensive stakeholder engagement to inform both the Strategy and the Scheme given the clear cross-over between the two. This will take the form of workshops and focus groups across Northern Ireland between March and June 2024 and we would like to invite you to take part.

The events will be roundtable discussions offering everyone a chance to have their say. Each series of workshops will have at least one online event for those unable to attend in person. Where an event is repeated it is not necessary to attend more than one. We may also schedule some additional online events over the summer, if necessary.

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| **Topic** | **Content** |
| **Eligibility**: How to determine who should receive support  | * Who should be eligible for home energy support schemes in future? How do we prioritise government support?
* What principles could be used to determine eligibility for future home energy interventions?
* How can we apply these principles to develop eligibility criteria for a new Affordable Warmth Scheme?
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| **Collaboration**: Identifying partners and their roles | * If home energy interventions are not an option, how do we target and deliver short-term support?
* For people who need emergency assistance, how can we work in partnership to ensure they access long term solutions? Who are relevant partners and what are their roles?
* How can this referral network / partnership approach support a new Affordable Warmth Scheme?
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| **Understanding and framing**: Improving our definition and developing a vision and principles  | * What does a Just Transition mean for fuel poverty?
* What should a vision and Principles for a Fuel Poverty Strategy be?
* What data and indicators could be used to support our work?
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| **Feedback session**  | * An overview of the input from workshops
* Proposed next steps and feedback on new or emerging issues
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**How to register**

* Details of all events and registration links for these workshops can be found on the Department for Communities website: [Fuel Poverty and the Just Transition | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk)](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/fuel-poverty-and-just-transition#toc-6)
* For further information on any of the events please contact: fuelpovertystrategy@communities-ni.gov.uk