

# Fuel poverty figures for 2015 and winter fuel payment statistics for 2016/17

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## 1. Background information

This article uses fuel poverty statistics from the Department for Energy and Climate Change and Winter Fuel Payments from the Department for Work and Pensions. The 2015 figures use the 'low income high cost' definition of fuel poverty. A report published in March 2012 on the review of the fuel poverty definition and target led to the present definition.

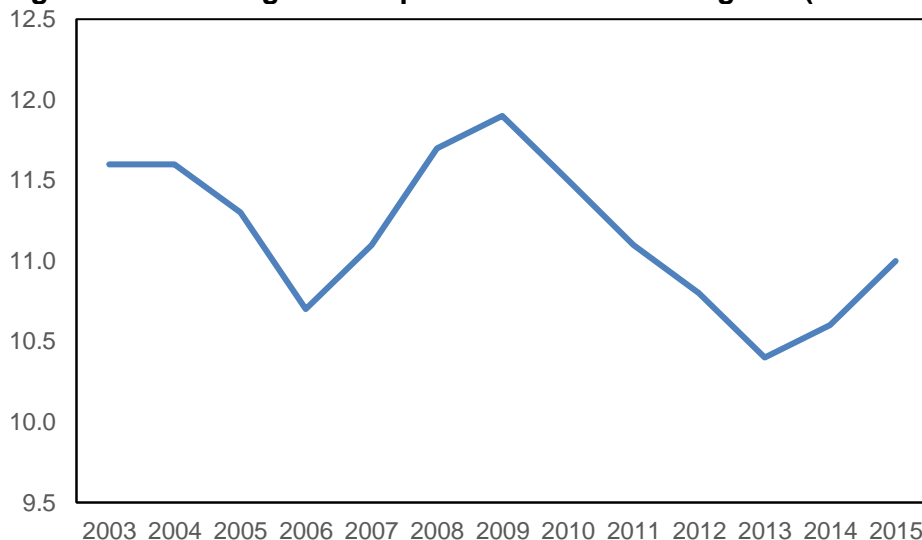
Under the low income high cost definition a household is considered to be fuel poor if they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level), and were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line. The key elements in determining whether a household is fuel poor or not are:

- the energy efficiency of the dwelling
- the cost of energy
- household

## 2. National results

The 2015 figures were published in June 2017, and reveal that the number of households in fuel poverty in England was estimated at 2.5 million, or 11.0% of all English households. Figure 1 tracks the percentage changes at the national level between 2003 and 2015. All the results use the low income high cost definition of fuel poverty. From a high of 11.9% in 2009, the percentage dropped to 10.4% in 2013.

**Figure 1: Percentage of fuel poor households in England (2003-2015)**



Source: [Department for Energy and Climate Change](#)

Table 1 shows the proportion of households who are fuel poor. The North East has the highest proportion (13.3%), the East has the lowest (7.8%) and with 11.8% the North West is placed 5th out of the nine regions.

**Table 1: Fuel poverty by region, 2015**

Region	Number of households <sup>1</sup>	Number of households in fuel poverty <sup>1</sup>	Proportion of households fuel poor (%)
North East	1,146,083	151,942	13.3
North West	3,069,950	362,486	11.8
Yorkshire and The Humber	2,254,417	278,953	12.4
East Midlands	1,944,560	246,838	12.7
West Midlands	2,336,127	315,987	13.5
East	2,502,974	194,527	7.8
London	3,324,255	335,205	10.1
South East	3,704,442	346,392	9.4
South West	2,374,045	269,887	11.4

<sup>1</sup> Household and fuel poverty numbers at region level come from the national fuel poverty statistics, 2015

### 3. Lancashire 12 and 14 results

An [interactive dashboard](#) containing map, graphs and tables details the results for the 14 Lancashire districts and the 941 lower super output areas (LSOAs) across the Lancashire-14 area.

The 2015 fuel poverty figures indicate that in the Lancashire-14 area, 77,134 households (12.2%) and in the Lancashire-12 area, 60,137 households (11.9%) were in fuel poverty. This was higher than the previous year of 11.3% and 10.9% respectively. These figures are also higher than the England average of 11.0 and slightly higher than the North West figure of 11.8%.

Table 2 details that within Lancashire, Pendle had the highest rate at 15.8% and Burnley, Hyndburn, Preston and Blackburn with Darwen had rates between 14.0 and 14.6%.

There were six Lancashire authorities with percentage rates that were less than the England average, including Fylde (8.5%), Wyre (9.8%), Chorley (9.8%), West Lancashire (9.8%), Wyre (9.8%), South Ribble (9.9%) and Ribble Valley (10.6%).

**Table 2: Fuel Poverty by Local Authority, 2015 - Lancashire 14**

District	Estimated number of households	Estimated number of fuel poor households	Proportion of households fuel poor (%)
Blackburn with Darwen	58,486	8,162	14.0
Blackpool	65,703	8,835	13.4
Burnley	38,309	5,611	14.6
Chorley	45,830	4,494	9.8
Fylde	35,564	3,038	8.5
Hyndburn	35,029	5,050	14.4
Lancaster	59,013	7,530	12.8
Pendle	38,092	6,027	15.8
Preston	58,723	8,218	14.0
Ribble Valley	24,545	2,608	10.6
Rossendale	29,631	3,608	12.2
South Ribble	47,039	4,672	9.9
West Lancashire	46,301	4,542	9.8
Wyre	48,255	4,739	9.8
Lancashire 14	630,520	77,134	12.2
Lancashire 12	506,331	60,137	11.9

## 4. Reducing fuel poverty

Central government website pages include details of [what the government is doing about household energy](#), [the energy efficiency in buildings and heating and housing benefits](#).

[National Energy Action](#) is a national charity that aims to eradicate fuel poverty and campaigns for greater investment in energy efficiency to help those who are poor and vulnerable.

## 5. Winter fuel payments

The [winter fuel payment](#) is a tax-free sum to help older people pay their heating bills. The amount is usually paid automatically, with some restrictions, to state pensioners or people entitled to various other state benefits.

The Department for Work and Pensions releases figures on [winter fuel payments by local authority boundaries](#) that include the figures for the Lancashire authorities. Recipients in the Lancashire-14 area totalled 304,750 in the 2016/17 financial year. Blackpool (30,030), Wyre (30,340) and Lancaster (29,260) had the largest number of recipients in the Lancashire-14 area, whilst Rossendale (13,230) had the lowest number during 2016/17. Following the national trend, this is a reduction of 1% over the previous year, attributed to the rise in the women's state pension age which has changed the age of entitlement for Winter fuel payments.

**Table 3: Winter Fuel Payment recipients 2016-2017 by local authority and gender**

District	All recipients	Female recipients	Male recipients
Burnley	16,670	8,940	7,730
Chorley	23,060	12,210	10,850
Fylde	21,830	11,920	9,910
Hyndburn	15,100	8,000	7,100
Lancaster	29,260	15,810	13,450
Pendle	17,310	9,110	8,200
Preston	21,940	11,660	10,280
Ribble Valley	14,430	7,800	6,630
Rossendale	13,230	7,030	6,190
South Ribble	23,900	12,880	11,020
West Lancashire	25,390	13,670	11,720
Wyre	30,340	16,500	13,840
<b>Lancashire-12</b>	<b>252,460</b>	<b>135,530</b>	<b>116,920</b>
Blackburn with Darwen	22,260	11,660	10,610
Blackpool	30,030	16,050	13,980
<b>Lancashire-14</b>	<b>304,750</b>	<b>163,240</b>	<b>141,510</b>

Source: Department for Work and Pensions, [winter fuel payments by local authority](#)

Further information on winter fuel payments, split by age and amount of payment, by local authority is available to download via the [winter fuel payment statistics webpage](#), published by the Department for Work and Pensions.

## 6. Fuel consumption data and energy prices

The website for the Department for Energy and Climate Change includes very detailed [electricity and gas consumption data](#) to Middle and Lower Layer Super Output Area levels for England and Wales. The department also publishes [quarterly energy prices](#) to domestic and industrial consumers for all major fuels.