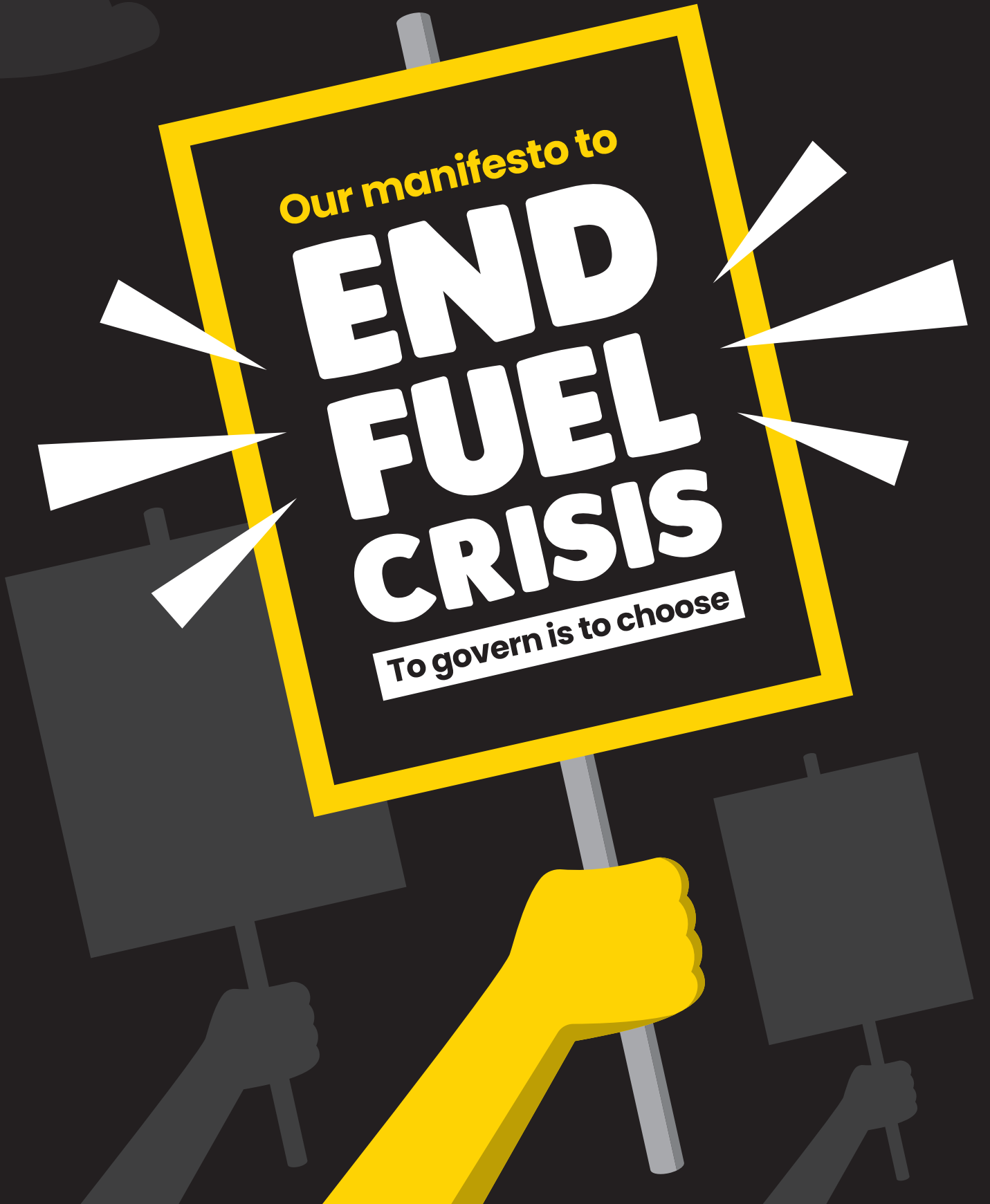


fuel
bank
FOUNDATION

Our manifesto to

**END
FUEL
CRISIS**

To govern is to choose



We are entering this election with unacceptable levels of fuel poverty and fuel crisis.

LIKE A FOODBANK, BUT FOR ENERGY

Fuel Bank Foundation is the only charity to provide emergency help, nationwide, to people living without heat, light and power because they can't afford to top up their prepayment meter or pay in advance for a bulk delivery of fuel if they are off the gas grid.

We provide help in the form of a fuel voucher, which is used to top up the prepayment meter, or a bulk delivery of oil, LPG or coal is arranged. In both cases, simple, easy to access and actionable advice is provided, alongside the emergency fuel.

This supports the client as they try to address and resolve the causes of fuel crisis to get themselves into a more sustainable position for the future.

OUR ASKS OF THE NEXT GOVERNMENT

We believe that "being warm should be the norm" and call on the next government to transform, once and for all, the lives of people in fuel poverty.

Without access to energy, people are trapped in a life of destitution - living in a cold, damp home, with no means to cook or clean their homes, or even themselves.

But with reliable, sustainable access to energy, they have a far better chance of escaping poverty and living a happier, healthier life.

Governments all have to make choices around how they spend money, on what and where. Ahead of the General Election, we are asking all political parties to adopt the priorities we have identified as the ones which would make the biggest difference to the lives of the people we support. Having been elected on this manifesto, they would then have a mandate to push forward with them as soon as they take office.

Here we set out the issues and our solutions to address them.

ASK 1

The journey towards Net Zero is critical, but it must be fair and equitable to all.

We want the next government to:

- Support vulnerable, low-income households if any Net Zero intervention adds costs to energy bills which, for too many, are already unaffordable.
- Prioritise fuel poor and vulnerable households so that they receive the benefits first.

ASK 2

Out of all Western Europe, the United Kingdom has the leakiest, least well-insulated homes. Significant academic evidence is available to demonstrate that investing in energy efficiency can yield considerable health benefits which, in turn, lead to fewer demands on the NHS.

We want the next government to:

- Urgently invest in a targeted national energy efficiency programme.
- Give priority to homes that are the hardest to heat.

ASK 3

The erosion of the real value of working-age benefits has pulled people into poverty and destitution because they don't have the resilience to survive financial crises, such as the doubling of energy prices.

We want the next government to:

- Make sure, through targeted financial support, that everybody has enough money to keep themselves warm.
- This needs to be regardless of the energy efficiency rating of the property.



THE PEOPLE WE SUPPORT

We work closely with the people we support to give them a voice to tell their story and ensure the reality of their situation is represented in our campaigning and influencing work.

This has been fundamental in helping us shape our manifesto.

The people we support are:

- Living in cold, damp homes.
- Exposed to significant health risks.
- Skipping meals, rationing heating and hot water or going without completely.

To date, we have supported over 1.5 million people across the UK

We have seen a 40% increase in demand for financial support in the last 12 months¹

66% of the people we support are not working and in receipt of benefits

Four million homes have a prepayment energy meter²

An estimated 4.4million households across Great Britain are not connected to the gas grid³



- 57% of people we have helped live in an ABC EPC-rated home and yet still can't afford to keep their prepayment meter topped up at all times. This means that they are frequently living without heat, light and power.

WE NEED A RESET IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND THE THIRD SECTOR

Treating charities as equal partners in the policy-making process will help the next government to successfully deliver its priorities.

Plugging into the wealth of insights they hold, and the lived experience of the clients they support, will improve its decisions. And, perhaps, most crucially of all, charities can use their insight to

“

I have two sons, both with asthma, and a child aged 2. The mum guilt is unreal. My meter doesn't have signal, so I never know what's available or been used. My whole child benefit is being swallowed into that meter every week. The guilt and upset it causes, worrying about choosing to top up the meter or my son's school meal account is gut wrenching.

”

advise how better outcomes can be delivered within current spending constraints. Whichever party forms the next government, Fuel Bank Foundation is ready to work with them to end the scandal of fuel crisis. Working in partnership, we can make rationing energy and the truly saddening effects of living without heat, light and power, like the stories below, a distant memory.

“

I couldn't sleep as I was worried about running out of gas and it was very cold. I have arthritis and when my house is cold this has a huge impact. I am in so much more pain, I also have a child and she cries if she is cold I was worried.

”

WE'RE CALLING ON WHOEVER FORMS THE NEXT GOVERNMENT TO MAKE SURE THAT:

ASK 1

The journey to Net Zero is fair and equitable to all, especially for low-income and vulnerable households.

ASK 2

They urgently invest in energy efficiency upgrades for the hardest to heat properties.

ASK 3

People don't fear falling cold: support is always available to address fuel crisis.



For more information

Visit: fuelbankfoundation.org/manifesto

All data and quotes relating to the people we have supported have been sourced from our own research from those helped in February and March 2024.

¹ 40% increase from 1st January - 20th May 2024 compared to the same period in 2023

² Ofgem, 2023 figures

³ The House of Commons Library

⁴ <https://www.nea.org.uk/>

Fuel Bank Foundation is a registered charity in England & Wales (1175049) and Scotland (SCO48330). Room 10, Wombourne, Civic Centre, Gravel Hill, Wombourne, Staffordshire, WV5 9HA.

fbf017/06.24

A yellow hand is shown holding a white sign with a black border. The sign has the text "BEING WARM SHOULD BE THE NORM" written in bold, yellow, uppercase letters. The sign is tilted slightly to the right. In the background, there are some yellow triangular shapes.