



# **FUEL POVERTY – THE WAY FORWARD**

**PAT AUSTIN  
DIRECTOR NEA NI**

# Overview



- What is Fuel Poverty
- About NEA NI
- Facts and figures
- Health Context
- The Way Forward

# NEA NI



- The Fuel Poverty Charity
- Policy Development-political influence, consultations, good practice etc
- Research – Review of Warm Homes
- Training – energy awareness, NVQ, City and Guilds, tailored for needs.
- Project Work – strategic interest in policy development e.g. Warming Up Project

# Fuel Poverty - Definition



***the situation in which a household would have to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain an acceptable level of temperature throughout the home***

# The Fuel Poverty Factors



- Low Income
- Increasing Energy Prices
- Energy Inefficiency

# Fuel Poverty Statistics



- **Fuel Poor Households –203,000 (33% of all households 2001 HCS)**
- **50% (101,500) households aged 60 +**
- **27% (54,810) households with children including two thirds (68%) of lone parent households**
- **73% are households without children including:**
  - 41% lone adult households (30,270)**
  - 56.2% lone older households (52,910)**

# Fuel Poverty Statistics



- 2004 Interim House Conditions Survey shows number of households in fuel poverty reduced from 203,000 to 153,530.
- Alongside unprecedented increases in oil, gas and impending electricity costs.
- DTI estimate that a 10% in energy prices plunge 8,000 households into fuel poverty.

# Fuel Poverty and Health



## Some Statistics

- **2000** cold weather related deaths annually (DSD)  
**1360 Older People** (DSD)
- **£40M** cost to the NI NHS (1991 figures)

## Growing causal link e.g.

- Asthma
- Respiratory conditions
- Ischemic heart disease

# Strategic Drivers



- **Global**

Kyoto targets on noxious emissions; high and rising oil prices

- **European**

Energy efficiency directives; rising natural gas prices

- **UK**

Home Energy Conservation Act; UK Fuel Poverty Strategy

- **Northern Ireland**

Investing for Health

Fuel Poverty Strategy for NI

Anti-Poverty Strategy for NI (under development)

# Strategic Vision



- Eradication of Fuel Poverty

*“ subject to the availability of the necessary resources, DSD and its partners aim to eliminate fuel poverty in vulnerable households by 2010 and in non-vulnerable households by 2016.”*

# Current Activity



- Campaigning lobbying with politicians policy makers
- Investing for Health
- Warmth to What Degree?
- Warm Start, Warming Up Project, Northern Exposure, Research
- Training and Awareness raising with health personnel

# Action Visioning



- Participation of fuel poor
- Better working cross sectoral working Health, Advice, Government, voluntary and community sector
- Research, Evaluation, Resources