DESNZ consultation on Continuing the Warm Home Discount Scheme

Submission from Feeding Britain (November 2025)

About Feeding Britain

Feeding Britain is an award-winning charity with a vision of a UK where no one goes hungry. We support a national network of 140 regional and local anti-hunger partnerships comprising more than 700 frontline organisations – ranging from community centres and schools, to local authorities and social enterprises.

By piloting innovative and effective new projects, and showing how severe or chronic food insecurity can be prevented, we are designing a road map for eliminating hunger from the communities we serve. By sharing this knowledge with others, and using it to work for systemic changes at a national level, we will ensure hunger becomes a thing of the past.

Consultation response

Do you agree with our proposal to continue the Warm Home Discount scheme supporting households at risk of fuel poverty for the next scheme period from 2026/27? Please provide any reasoning/comments/evidence to support your view.

We support the continuation of the Warm Home Discount scheme. Many of those seeking emergency food provision from our frontline organisations are doing so in part because of the high cost of energy bills, and any financial relief available to these households must be maintained. 6 million homes are living in fuel poverty across the UK[1] - an increase of 25% since October 2021[2]. In addition to the measures already taken to expand eligibility for the scheme, and to automatically register customers through data sharing, we wish to see the current energy bill rebate of £150 increased.

Our network has shared a number of examples of people they support for whom energy costs are a real concern, and for whom initiatives such as the Warm Homes Discount constitute a crucial means of support:

- "The Warm Homes Discount, including the variant recently introduced to reach those living in 'Park Homes', is a vital support for low income households struggling with their energy bills in particular, but also struggling with ongoing cost-of-living pressures in general. Every penny saved on energy bills is more in the pocket for nourishing food. There is still an annual struggle within low income households, especially families with children, between 'eating and heating'. The recent increase in, and expanded eligibility for, the Warm Homes Discount is a vital (though not sufficient) weapon in that struggle. We support its extension."

[1] FBF-Fuel-Crisis-Report-2024_Digital.pdf
[2] Ibid.

- “I run a community Food club in Manor Park, East End of London […] The two largest groups are 28% Bangladeshi and 28% Malayalam-speakers from Kerala State, India. We find that these people-groups are most likely to have three generations in one household. We deliver wrap-around support including English classes, digital inclusion, money management skills, and we are about to start basic health metrics for all. Regularly our members ask us for support about housing problems. When members bring photos, I am shocked by the terrible housing conditions in the private rented sector immediately around us: there is disastrous levels of mould, infestation, cracked walls, gaps to the outside, broken windows, vegetation breaking in. The last thing the landlords are thinking about is their responsibility to provide properties with a suitable eco-rating. All told this means the properties leak heat far more than social rented or privately owned accommodation. Those who need the wrap-around services are those with the most barriers to full participation in society. They are the poorest, with co-morbidities and disabilities which mean they are living in the poorest accommodation and therefore in the most need of the Warm Homes Discount Scheme.”
- “Client has no available monies and is in receipt of benefits, ESA/PIP. His next payment is due in two weeks. Client lives in social housing and has difficulty keeping warm due to the electric heating being faulty, and the reliance on a fan heater that uses excessive amounts of electric. Client has £8.75 debt on meter. He is now living without gas or electric. Client has ongoing mental health and this situation is causing him increased stress and anxiety. Client is reliant on food banks to help him to manage his nutrition.”
- “I’m struggling to get by; the cost of topping up my prepayment meter and buying food basics just keeps going up and up and up. I knew my energy costs were rising but didn’t realise it would go up this much. This month I’ve been cutting back on meals and I’ve had to start using the food bank but it’s half an hour away and I can’t afford a taxi or bus […] I’ve been spending most of my time wrapped up in my duvet just to keep warm as I’m frightened to put my heating on.”