

BRIEFING FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS



POWER TO THE REGIONS

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CLIMATE POLICY FOR THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

The cost of living remains the public's top concern, with energy bills the primary driver. Fossil fuel spikes are a key driver of these bill increases. Well-designed climate policy offers a route to delivering what people care about - lower bills, greater energy security, and visible local benefits.

The West Midlands has a very high fuel-poverty rate, making rapid bill relief and targeted support particularly urgent. It's both the right thing to do and the thing voters are most likely to notice.

The electoral opportunity: There's an electoral prize on the table. We found voters are ready to reward a party that champions bill-cutting policies.

12.4% households
in fuel poverty

1.18m households
could benefit

3 million people
that could benefit

The Government has already begun cutting costs from electricity bills and putting money back in people's pockets. This package sets out the next steps to finish the job and make the benefits tangible in for people across the West Midlands. This means:

- **Cutting bills now:** Removing legacy policy levies from electricity bills and introducing a simple, automatic social tariff for households most exposed to high energy costs.
- **Ensuring everyone can access clean energy:** Using a range of measures so social tenants, private renters and homeowners all have a practical route to lower-cost clean energy.

Why this matters

With 12.4% of households in the West Midlands in fuel poverty and the average fuel poverty gap sitting at £362, immediate measures could benefit households across the region.¹

At the same time, investment measures would create visible local projects and longer-term protection from fossil-fuel price volatility.

RECOMMENDED POLICY PACKAGE

The package set out below would cut bills immediately, tackle fuel poverty at scale, and increase investment in clean, secure energy for every housing tenure.

It would also reduce the UK's exposure to volatile fossil fuel markets and give government a proven, popular story to tell on delivery.

RENTERS' ENERGY DIVIDEND

Great British Energy-backed partnerships enabling low-income rented blocks to buy locally generated solar power at least 20% below the grid tariff.

What this means for the West Midlands: Around 222,000 privately rented homes across the West Midlands could benefit, with a modelled fuel-poverty reduction of 48,500 households and a £4.7 million annual boost to the local economy.

What this means for households: At least £120 a year in lower bills, with no upfront cost to the household.

What voters in the West Midlands think: *"I like this idea because I'd never, in my wildest dreams, expect to benefit from solar panels in a rented property unless they were already there."*

HOME UPGRADE STAMP DUTY REBATE

A rebate for qualifying energy upgrades completed within five years of buying a primary residence below £1 million.

What this means for the West Midlands: Each year in the West Midlands, there are around 65,000 residential property sales. Of those, it is anticipated that at least 8,900 households could be supported through this scheme over the course of a five-year timeframe. This would see a saving for households of £33.4 million over five years.

What this means for households: Up to £3,750 back, one-off.

What voters in the West Midlands think: *"The rebate is a good amount of money. The bit that stood out to me the most was how you don't have to find the money immediately after buying, that 5 year window is great."*

HEAT-AS-A-SERVICE GUARANTEE

A partial government guarantee for accredited providers, reducing financing costs for subscriptions covering installation, maintenance and operation of clean heating.

What this means for households: An indicative 13% reduction in subscription costs, around £230 a year.

REMOVE POLICY LEVIES FROM ELECTRICITY BILLS

Move legacy policy levies from household electricity bills into general taxation.

What this means for the West Midlands: Automatic relief across around 1.18 million households in the West Midlands, lifting 70,200 households out of fuel poverty.

What this means for households: Around £175 a year for a typical household.

What voters in the West Midlands think: *"I like this one a lot, people will be able to understand it easily. The money won't change your life but I think the fact that the people don't have to really do anything, it's just something that's going to be automatically done and people will see savings makes it great."*

SIMPLE SOCIAL ENERGY TARIFF

An automatic 25% discount on energy tariffs for all eligible households.

What this would mean for the West Midlands: There are around 590,000 potentially eligible households (roughly 470,000 Universal Credit, 120,000 Pension Credit), with an estimated 168,000 able to leave fuel poverty as a result of this policy. Extension to low-income households falling outside the benefits system and some disabled households with high energy usage as data matching allows.

What this means for households: An average annual saving of about £415.

What voters in the West Midlands think: *"Anything to help disabled people and low-income pensioners — I'm sold with that. Those are the people that need it more than anything."*

Full report available here:



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