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**My daughter's health has never been right since we came here; she's had one chest infection after another. I'm convinced it's the cold in this house.**

”

“

**I don't see how they can expect a pensioner to pay these prices. We can't afford to put the heating on.**

”

“

**Even in the summer, there's always a draft. We might as well put our money in the middle of the floor and burn it. The heat just goes out the door. Either you spend money on food or you pay the electricity bill.**

”





Fuel poverty – or the inability to heat one's home adequately – is becoming a major problem of the 1980s, to which a number of factors have contributed. Since the OPEC crisis in the early 1970s the price of fuel has risen sharply, while the value of money coming into the home has plummeted, and the standards of insulation in British houses have proved to be so low that expensive heating was literally going out of the window.

In an effort to tackle the problems of fuel poverty a new organisation, Scottish Neighbourhood Energy Action (SNEA), was established in 1983. With the aim of "creating jobs to make Scotland warmer", SNEA began promoting and assisting local energy efficiency projects.



# S.N.E.A. CONFERENCE

## £7 Billion wasted . . .

Britain wasted £7 billion in heating bills, according to Secretary of State for Energy Mr Peter Walker.

Over £2 million could be saved in domestic heating bills alone with proper insulation methods, he said.

Mr Walker was speaking at the Scottish Neighbourhood Energy Action Conference last month.

The conference launched Glasgow's Energy Week — part of the national Monergy campaign.

Mr Walker was guest speaker at the conference. Other speakers included Glasgow District Council Labour leader Baillie James McLean, Strathclyde Regional Council Labour leader Michael Connarty, Energy Advisory Services Director Peter Chapman and Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations Director Alistair Grimes.

Mr Walker allayed SNEA fears for the Single Payments system. Before the conference, SNEA had expressed concern that low-income earners, pensioners and the jobs of 900 people employed on Scotland's energy projects were at risk if an equivalent of the 100% system was not provided.

The Department of Health and Social Security is abolishing the Single Payments system in 1988.

Mr Walker told the conference the Government was committed to finding an alternative system where low-income householders and pensioners would continue to receive the level of help presently available to insulate and draughtproof their homes.

Also at the conference, Baillie McLean spoke of the work Glasgow Council is doing in the area of fuel poverty. He mentioned Heatwise and the heat-with-rent innovation.

Mr Connarty told the delegates that although energy projects provided a valuable service, more money was needed to tackle the root problems of condensation and dampness.

About 150 people from throughout Scotland attended the conference which SNEA co-ordinator Tony Nec described as very successful. "The conference brought together all the people involved in the issue, such as project workers, local authorities, community and tenants organisations. From projects as far apart as Dumfries and Alesch, people were able to exchange ideas and experiences," he said.

Mr Nec also said the exhibition of materials in the City Chambers enable delegates to talk to suppliers and be kept up-to-date with developments.

# NEWSWISE

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HOT NEWS FROM HEATWISE

## FAMILY SPLIT BY COLD

NEW HOME A DISASTER

Heatwise spotlights mothers plight!

The plight of yet another family affected by a cold and damp home came to light during January's cold weather. But this time, Mrs McGregor of Tollcross claims her family is being split up because cold is making her daughter ill.

Mrs McGregor and her husband who is an upholsterer at the threatened B.S.E.L. works in Springburn, moved into their new home over a year ago.

"We were being with my mother, but I wanted a home of my own. This place seemed good when I first saw it, but if I'd known the troubles we'd face, I would never have taken it."

Not long after moving in with their daughter Clare (9), the troubles set in. According to Mrs McGregor, they had two bursts in their first winter there and they started noticing leaks coming from the roof.

"It started in Clare's bedroom and then spread to the hall as well. The council came several times but it hasn't stopped it."

### SENT AWAY

For the last six months, Mrs McGregor has seen her daughter Clare to live with her grandmother nearby.

"Clare's health has never been right since we came here. She's had one chest infection after another. I'm convinced the cold in this house. You can feel it in Clare's bedroom. That's why I've sent her away and now we leave that room empty."

Mrs McGregor would like to move to a new home because she wants her family to be together but she has been told by the council that because of the long waiting list she may have to wait over two years.

### £250 MILLION

The McGregor's problems are familiar ones to Heatwise with 49% of Glasgow's housing affected by condensation. According to the District Council themselves, they need to spend a massive £250 million on heating and insulation to cure the problems in their housing stock.

Last year's "Inquiry into Housing in Glasgow" led by Sir Robert Greive also put the finger on heating problems and listed greater insulation and heating systems on their list of priorities.

by Ian McKinnel



Mrs McGregor with daughters Clare and Charlene. Clare has to live with her grandmother.

## CONTENTS

- All the latest from the Projects 2
- The Magnificent Seven from Heatwise 3
- Check out the latest Workforce success story 3
- Dundee HEAT — the Tayside approach to draught-proofing and loft insulation 4
- Spotlight on Commonhead 5
- Read about the Heatwise Outdoor Club Scotland Captain Roy Aitken visits Tollcross 6

£50

## HEATWISE BRAIN BOX

£50 FOR THE BEST IDEA PLUS THREE PRIZES OF £10 FOR RUNNERS UP

We all know there is no shortage of brains in Heatwise, don't we? Well, here is YOUR chance to cash in on your good ideas.

Enter our "suggestions" competition and if you can come up with a good idea on how to make Heatwise a more efficient organisation you could win up to £50.

Here's how to enter: Just fill in the official coupon on Page 2 of Newswise. Send it to Ian McKinnel with your suggestion on sheets of A4 paper. Enclose any illustrations or drawings with it.

Your suggestions can cover any of the following topics: improving productivity; improving working conditions; improving the quality of customer service; or improving any other aspect of the operation of Heatwise.

You can submit more than one suggestion but make sure you enclose a coupon with each entry. Joint entries also will be accepted.

The closing date for applications is Tuesday March 31.

The entries will be judged by a panel chosen from Heatwise senior management.

### ● WINNER OF CARTOON CAPER

The winner of the £10 cartoon contest was Neil Howie, of Broadholm project. Neil correctly picked the answers as B, C and A.





## OF THOSE WE SPOKE TO:

**1/2**

Nearly half of families in work have visited a foodbank

**80%**

Over 80% of disabled people say their physical health has deteriorated as a result of rising bills

**2/3**

Over 2/3rds of people on prepayment meters said their physical health had been impacted by the **Cost of Living Crisis** or preferred not to say, compared to **less than 50%** on other payment types

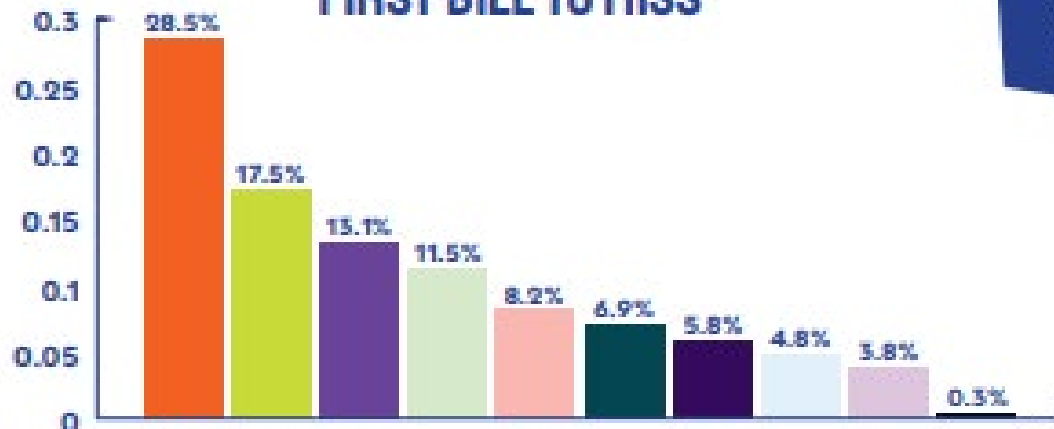
**43%**

43% of retired people say they first ration food when bills are tight, compared to 27% of working-age households

**4/5**

4 in 5 single parents said their mental health had been impacted by the **Cost of Living Crisis** or preferred not to say, double the rate of couples with children.

### FIRST BILL TO MISS



Among all groups, people are choosing heating over eating when bills get tight



- Food
- Energy
- Rent
- None
- Internet
- Other
- Debt
- Mobile Phone
- Council Tax
- Mortgage

