

Review of the Fuel Poverty Advisory Group  
Response by FPAG

The Group broadly welcomes and agrees with the recommendations of the Review, although there are reservations on one or two points.

- We agree on the desirability of a work plan and of cooperating with officials on this, although we will obviously want to maintain the right balance between independence and cooperation (paragraph 47).
- In paragraph 48 we agree on most of the output. However, as well as asking the right questions, we need to help to find the answers and this sometimes, e.g. with other Government Departments, requires considerable follow-up.
- On Paragraph 49, we think it would be helpful to pool our knowledge on fuel poverty policies and different areas, but are rather doubtful about specifically changing our remit to cover this.
- We agree about the desirability of more housing expertise/links to, and credibility with, ODPM on the Group (paragraph 47).
- On paragraph 51, we agree with some reduction in Group meetings, but if the reduction were too radical the Group would become detached. Preferably 4, but if necessary 5, meetings per year seems sensible. Subgroups – also involving other Government Departments – are a sensible way forward.
- On paragraph 52-4, we are concerned about resources. It is not possible for us to fulfil our role without modest analytical back-up. We believe that the Fuel Poverty Monitoring and Technical Group should be revived; and that we should be able to rely on similar support from Defra/DTI as we have had in the past, to supplement resources from Group members. We do not believe that we should spend valuable time negotiating for funds with other Fuel Poverty Groups which themselves are unlikely to have the necessary resources available.