

20 Feb 2025

PayPoint partner with the Fuel Bank Foundation to deliver emergency fuel support

Welwyn Garden City, 20 February 2025: PayPoint and Fuel Bank Foundation are working together to deliver fuel vouchers to support those most in need.

Each year in the UK, many households who prepay for their energy lose access to heat, light and power because they can't afford to top-up their meter. The Fuel Bank Foundation is the only national charity who gift energy top-up vouchers for prepayment meters to help people and families living at the sharp end of fuel poverty.

Those who receive Fuel Bank energy vouchers can redeem their pre-paid top-up vouchers for energy meters in any PayPoint store, to get their heat, light and power back on as quickly as possible. Therefore, it is so important that these emergency energy vouchers are applied directly and immediately to the customers energy key or card, so they receive the necessary support. They should not be exchanged for cash, as this does not address the essential need of restoring warmth, light, and power to their homes.

Fuel Bank Foundation has supported more than 1.9 million people since launching in 2015.

With energy costs showing no signs of coming down and following the Government announcement last year that only those claiming pension credit or other means-tested benefits will receive the Winter Fuel Payment, the charity anticipates that demand for support this year will be greater than ever.

Whilst the fuel voucher addresses the immediate need of keeping the lights and heating on, Fuel Bank Foundation also provide person-centred advice that empowers the people they support to address the issues that are making things difficult for them.

Matthew Cole, CEO of Fuel Bank Foundation, said: *“Over the next few months, we estimate that more than a quarter of a million people will turn to Fuel Bank Foundation for emergency help because they can't afford to top-up their energy meter or fill their heating oil tank, coal bunker or log store. Sadly, many of them will be young families with children at home or vulnerable.*

“Without our help, they will be forced to live in cold, damp homes, with no energy for heating, lighting, cooking or cleaning. Living in a cold home can have a devastating impact on the physical health and mental wellbeing of both the young and old. Many children, for example, are forced to go to school tired, hungry and in dirty uniforms, and are condemned to a lifetime of poverty.

“There are around six million households in the UK in fuel poverty. It's sorrowful to think that so many people face disconnection simply because they cannot afford energy. The consequences are profound: children unable to bathe in warm water, parents skipping meals to pay for energy, and elderly people living in homes that exacerbate health conditions. That is why it is so important that we get help to people as quickly and as easily as possible.”

Jo Toolan, Managing Director of Payments at PayPoint said: *“Supporting Fuel Bank Foundation has never been more important to guarantee effective distribution of the scheme and ensuring it is able to support as many people as possible.*

“Through our extensive network, we're ensuring that energy support is accessible when and where it's needed most. This reinforces our commitment to ensuring retailers serve as a vital support

pillar for communities across the UK, whilst also offering additional sources of revenue generation for our store owners.”

With over 30,000 locations across the UK, more than 99% of Brits live within 1 mile of a PayPoint retailer partner. The stores offer convenience and flexibility for consumers, including those topping up energy meters, thanks to their accessibility and early-until-late opening hours. This is particularly important for households on prepayment meters during the colder months, as they need to top up meters outside of standard working hours.

The provision of emergency fuel voucher redemption is so important, and demonstrative of the key role PayPoint retailer partners play in their local communities, ensuring that vulnerable households receive fast, efficient, and secure access to essential fuel support during challenging times.