

Environmental *Change* Institute

Delivering for the fuel poor

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# Some givens

- Reducing energy poverty is about capital investment
  - Short-term help = more income and fuel switching
- Energy poor are hard to find
  - requires both detailed income assessment and energy audit of the home
  - many lead chaotic lives or hide
  - and all have no savings

# Ideal approach

- Area-based to incorporate the hidden and chaotic, no stigma, systematic
- First focus on where energy poverty concentrated
- Progress systematically to less severe areas over time

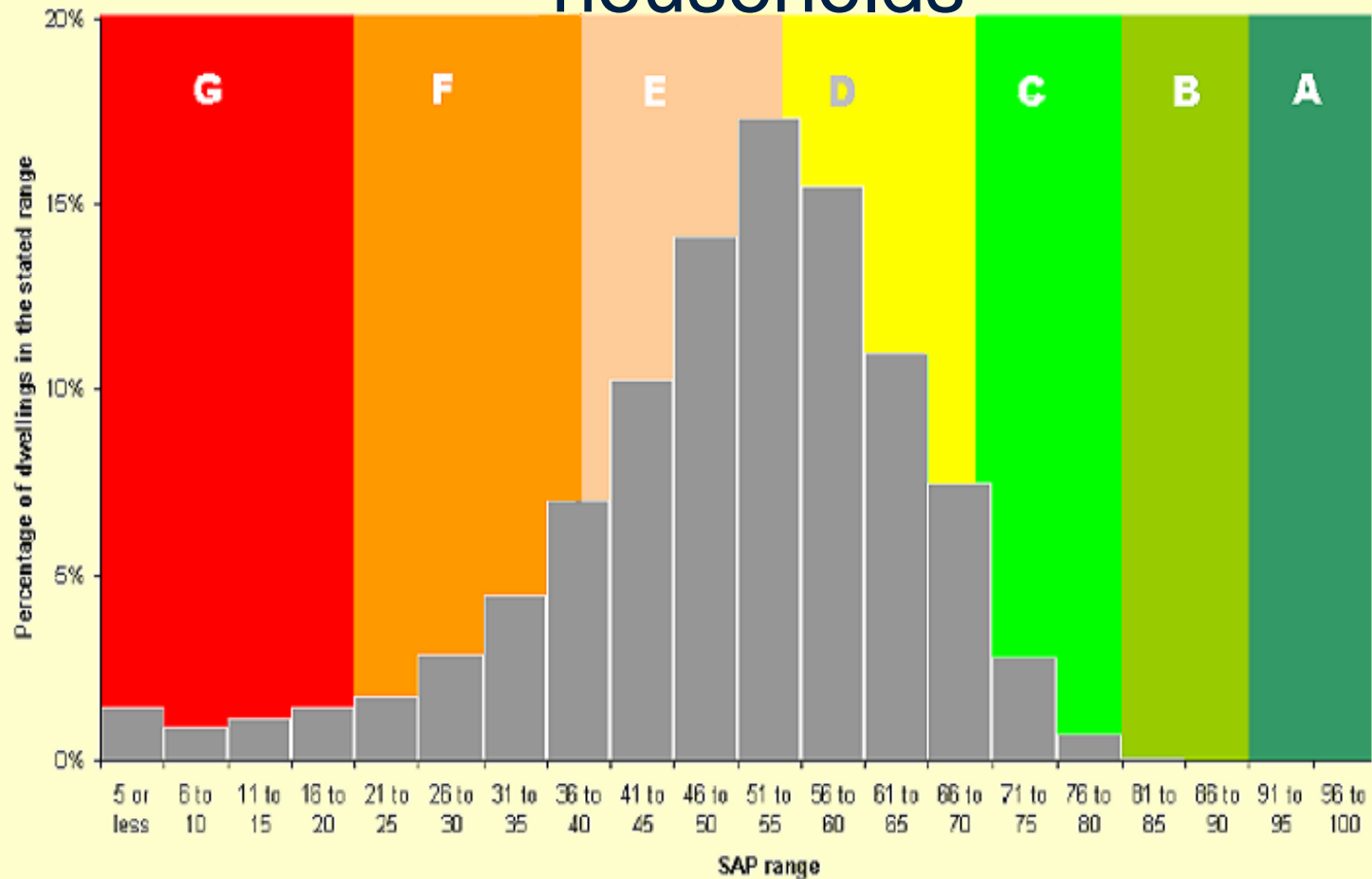
# Monitoring vs delivery

- Two very different tasks
- Monitoring = academic, needed to identify progress, uses sophisticated national data, probably useless on the doorstep
- For energy efficiency improvements, start with delivery – have to visit the home
  - Define minimum ‘need to know’ on the doorstep
  - Less than €20,000 household income?
- Can only monitor change if there is action

# Start with the energy poor

- Gain the householder's trust – takes patience, time and money
- Requires especially-skilled, empathetic people to deliver
- Each property and each household is individual – need flexible, sensitive solutions
- High calibre, reliable, trustworthy, local installers – good quality work that meets householder's priorities
- Be aware that people may say 'No' initially

# Energy efficiency distribution of households

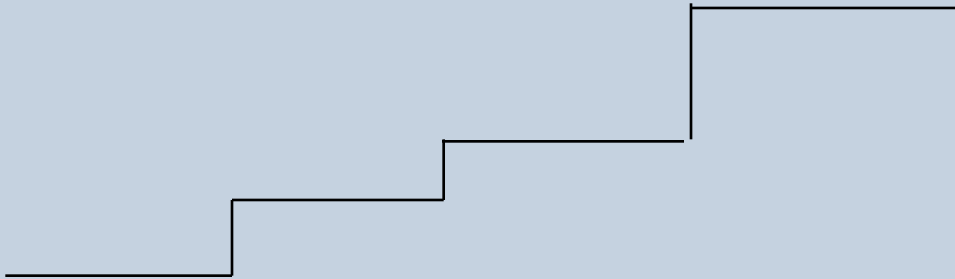


# What energy efficiency standard?

- Use holistic standards, not individual measures
- Standards require trusted installers, to cope with the conditions of each property and householder's wishes
- Average of band A by 2050 for climate change policy

# Energy-efficiency trajectory

- Major refurbishment to a high standard in one go?
- Or several small interventions, over the years?





# Electricity

- Include all energy uses in the home to an adequate standard, not just heating
- All fuels paid for from the same purse
- What action on electricity for lights and appliances?
- Product minimum energy efficiency standards – not much benefit for the energy poor
- Need scrappage schemes for the energy poor

# Who delivers?

- The most-trusted agency = local authority?
- So, give each local authority the duty to reduce energy poverty and the funds
- Tackle worst areas of energy poverty first

# Who pays?

Dual aims:

Release the equity in the building  
Make energy-efficient buildings more valuable

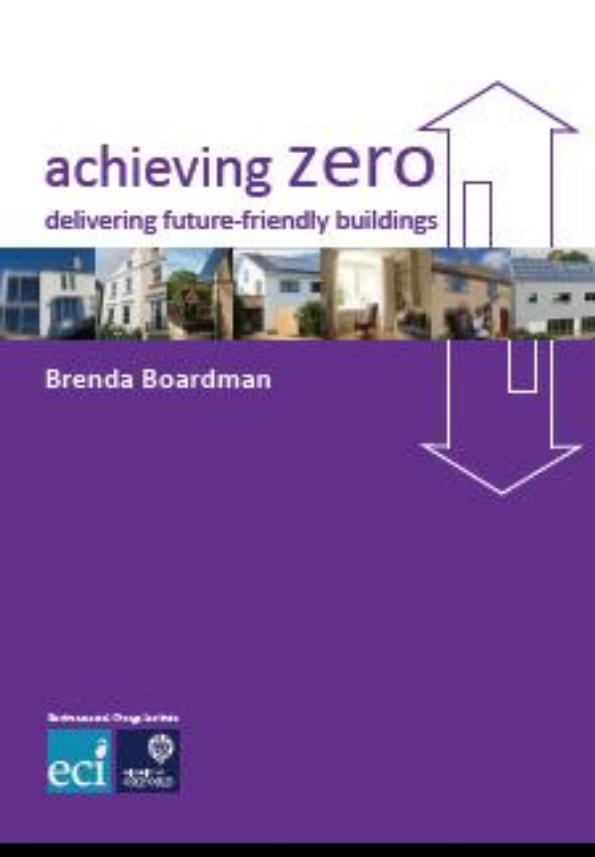
- Building owner's responsibility – landlords pay
- Loans for poor owner occupiers, at zero interest
- Only a few energy poor get a grant or subsidy
- Government's cost is minimal with tough regulations

# Value of other benefits

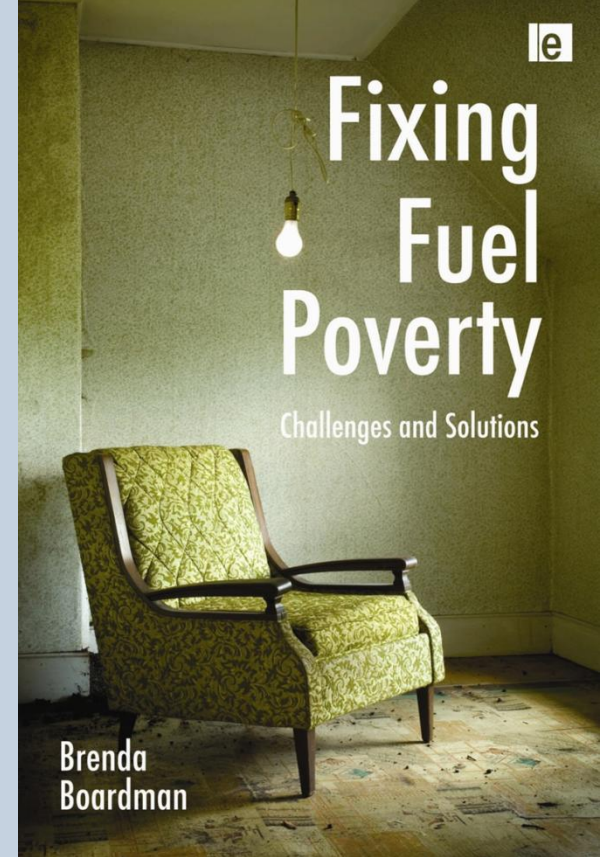
- More comfortable, happier people
- Less physical and mental ill health among fuel poor
- Cost of refurbishing a cold home recovered through reduced health costs in 7 years
- Children have better school attendance
- Less debts with utilities and housing providers

# Résumé

- Cold homes expensive for health providers and society
- Need comprehensive policy on energy-efficiency of housing, all tenures, all energy, over time
- Grants for energy poor, only
- Focus on delivery not monitoring
- Good for energy poverty and climate change



Thank you



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