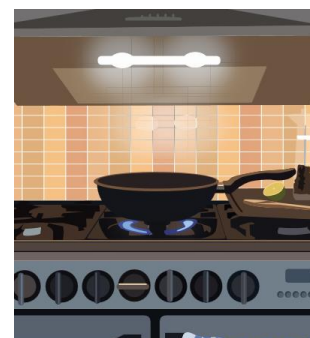


Fuel Poverty Beyond Heating

Research by the DEMAND Centre (Simcock et al. 2016) shows that well-being and a minimally-decent quality of life depends on multiple uses of energy. Analysing UK policy documents on fuel poverty, the researchers found that the overriding emphasis is on heating and warmth, and less attention is paid to how and why vulnerable households 'under-consume' other key energy services. The researchers explain that uses of energy for accessing 'basic necessities' for minimally-decent living standard, e.g. lighting and computers, warrant more substantial and explicit attention in discussions of fuel poverty.



Simcock, N., G. Walker and R. Day (2016) Fuel poverty in the UK: beyond heating?. People, Places and Policy 10/1: 25-41

Interpretations of needs have changed



Other DEMAND research (Walker et al. 2016) shows that changes in shared understandings of what counts as a minimal standard of living have consequences for energy demand. Analysing secondary data from deliberative workshops (organised by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation), in which participants discussed the meaning of minimum living standards, the researchers tracked the ways in which new energy uses became 'normal' and needed over time, often counter to other policy objectives, like those of reducing carbon emissions.

Walker, G., N. Simcock and R. Day (2016) Necessary energy uses and a minimum standard of living in the United Kingdom: Energy justice or escalating expectations?. Energy Research & Social Science 18: 129-138

Contact the researchers: Dr Neil Simcock (n.d.simcock@ljmu.ac.uk), Dr Rosie Day (r.j.day@bham.ac.uk) and Prof Gordon Walker (g.p.walker@lancaster.ac.uk).

The research was supported by the DEMAND Centre funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council as part of the RCUK Energy Programme and by EDF as part of the R&D ECLEER Programme.