

## It's time that gas and electricity supplies were nation...

Published: January 13, 2026, 6:05 am

---

As the [Guardian has reported](#) this morning:

*Millions of homes will be forced to pay some of the highest energy bills for the past decade after the industry regulator gave suppliers the green light to raise their prices by up to £153 a year.*

*Households across Great Britain that use a default energy tariff to buy their gas and electricity can expect a sharp increase in their bills from October this year after the regulator lifted its energy price cap for the winter.*

This is profoundly worrying.

Firstly, the reason for the price increases is supposedly because of market pressures. Actually, as massive profit increases at BP, Shell and other companies shows, that is nothing more than profit-taking.

Second, this is apparently intended to keep small market suppliers afloat - because otherwise they would go bust and the supposed 'market' in domestic energy supply would fail.

Third, the impact will, of course, be deeply regressive: fuel poverty is a fact for those on low incomes.

Fourth, this will inevitably link to flu deaths: they are largely caused by fuel poverty.

Fifth, note this is happening as Universal Credit is cut by £20 a week.

Could you make this up? Only if you are a believer that markets are for the benefits of the companies in them and are not for the benefit of consumers could you make any such scenario up.

What were the right reactions to price increases? First, if companies were going to fail as a result, they should have been allowed to do so. That's what happens in markets.

Second, if there is no domestic energy market (and there is not: it's an abusive charade, exploiting the least well off most) then the pretence should be dropped.

Third, the companies in that market should be nationalised. That's what should happen for utilities where come what may, whoever you but from, there's only one wire and one pipe into your house and no real choice at all.

Fourth, a nationalised energy supplier should supply a clear, simple, tariff that is lowest price to all. The current exploitation of the elderly, those without internet and who stay with a supplier should end for good.

Fifth, that nationalised company should be run on a not for profit, after allowing for funding reinvestment basis.

Sixth, if there are forced price changes because of market moves that company should be required to work with other government agencies to provide credit to those least well off to protect them from sudden price changes.

Or, seventh, pensioners and those on universal credit should get a fuel adjustment to their payments to allow for such changes instead.

We have a state to protect us. That protection includes the expectation that the state will prevent poverty. The state we have is not doing that. And it is not good enough. It's protecting companies instead.

We need a state that gets priorities right. It's really not hard to do. I have set out the mechanism. Now, why can't we have Opposition parties agree on such policies to ensure that they can deliver the protection that this government will not provide?