

Justice and Energy Markets: The Case of Social Housing Tenants

Who is responsible for affordable energy?

Elizabeth Errington and Dr Noel Longhurst

Affordability of Energy

- “Injustice” of high energy prices on the campaign trail
- Energy Justice Framework specifically identifies justice of:
 - Recognition
 - Procedural
 - Distribution



Affordability of Energy

Traditional response of UK has been Fuel Poverty Policy which responds to three 'problems':

- Low income
- Energy efficiency of homes
- Energy prices



Affordability of Energy

Fuel Poverty Definitions vary across UK nations and are:

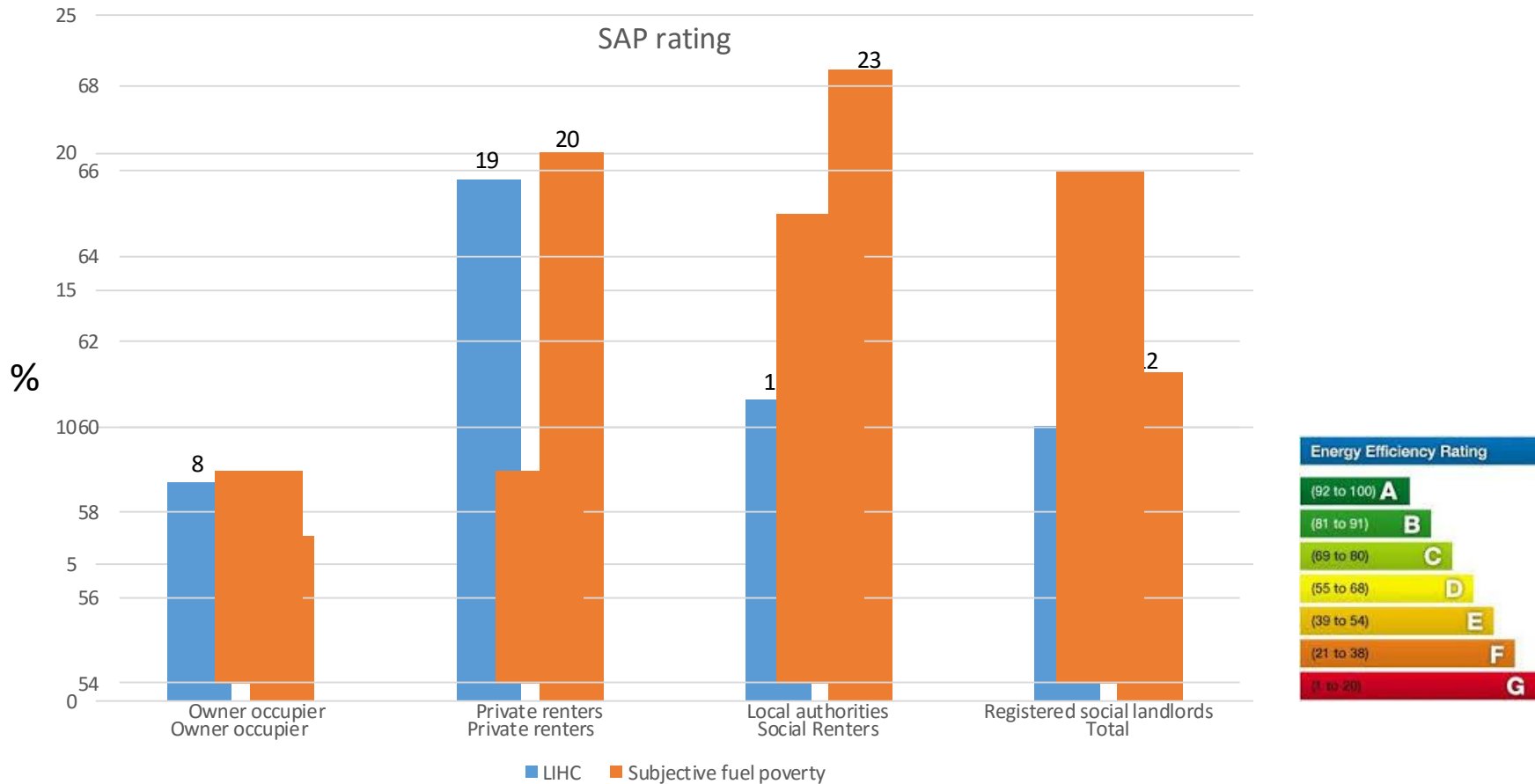
- Based on required / modelled expenditure
- 10 % *absolute* measure in Northern Ireland, Wales & Scotland
- Low Income High Cost *relative* measure in England



Accountability for affordable energy

		England*	Scotland	Wales	NI
% of fuel poor (2015)		10.6%	30.7%	23%	42%
Procedural	Is there a statutory eradication target?	None	2016 Target not met	Eradicate as far as reasonably practicable, by 2018	2016 Target not met, Never set in statute
	Is there a statutory energy efficiency target?	As many as reasonably practicable	Yes	None	None
	Is there annual fuel poverty reporting?	Yes	None	Yes	None
	Are there annual fuel poverty statistics	Yes Includes English Housing Survey	Yes Scottish House Condition Survey	None Future Wales House Conditions Survey	None House Condition Survey delayed
Distributional	Income payment (Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Benefit from Energy Company Obligation (ECO) / Warm Home Discount (WHD)	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
	Central Government Funding for local authority and third sector	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Housing Associations and Fuel Poverty



Official fuel poverty measure quadrant, by tenure
 (Source: English Housing Survey, Fuel Poverty Dataset 2013)

DECC (2015)

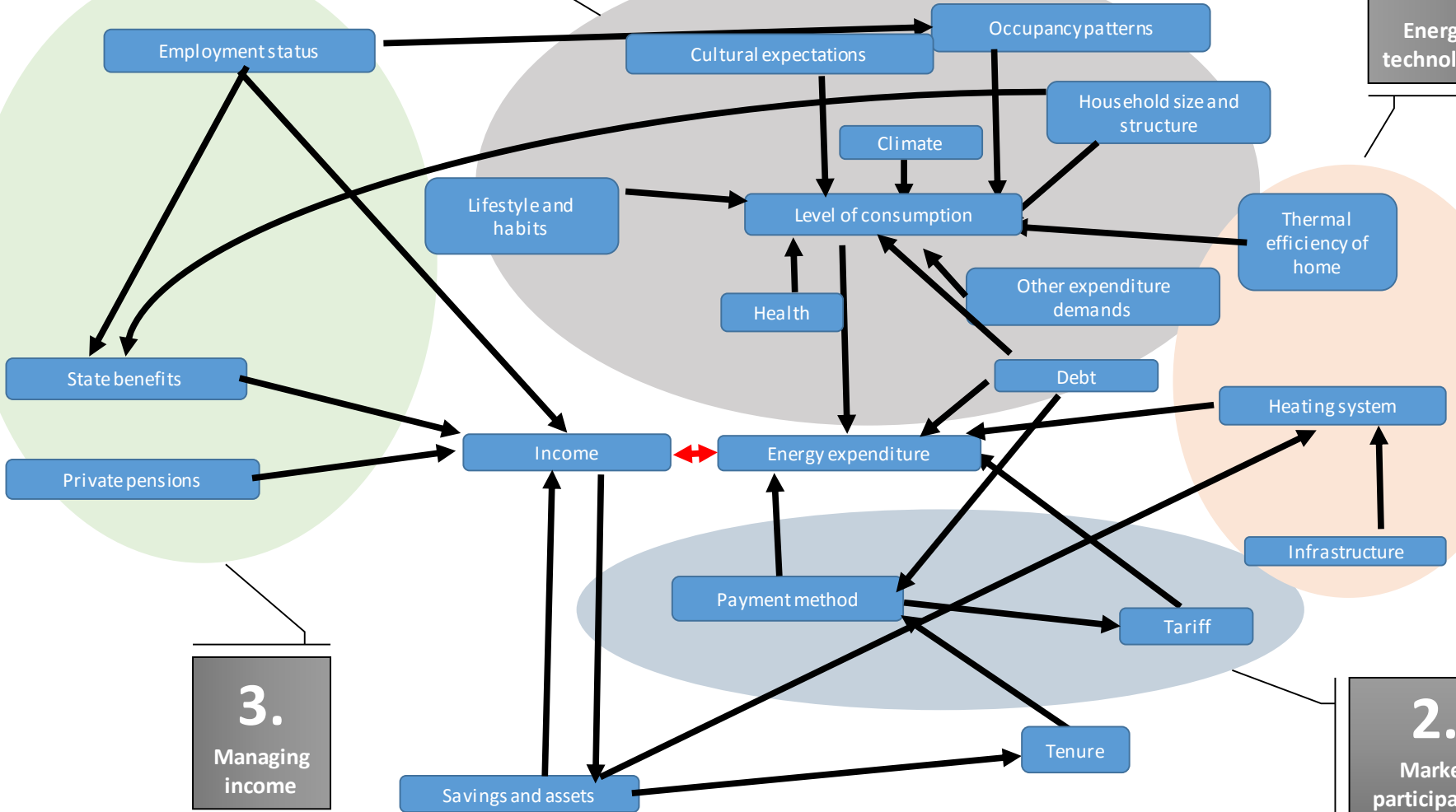
Energy vulnerability as assemblage

4.
Managing consumption

1.
Energy technology

3.
Managing income

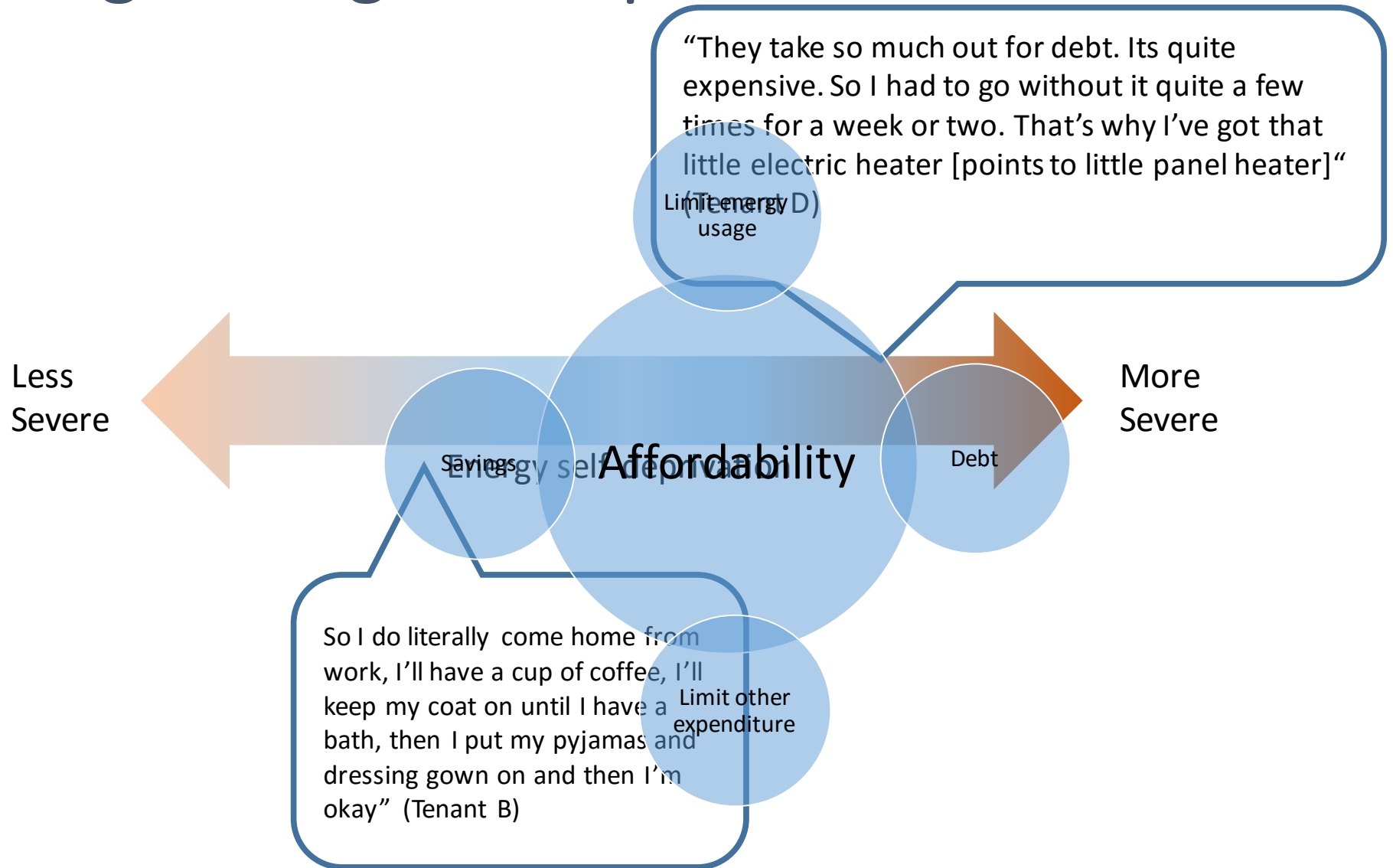
2.
Market participation



Activity in different spaces of agency

	1. Energy technologies	2. Market participation	3. Managing income	4. Managing consumption
Housing Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofit • Boiler replacement • Fabric First / Passivhaus • Asset disposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited advice on switching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits checks • Support with WHD • Grant applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy conservation tips • Support with debt management
Tenants		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited market participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited opportunities to improve income (in short term) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some control over level of (under) consumption

Negotiating self-deprivation



'Inactive' consumers

“I am conscious of it, yeah, because it costs me so much that I’m constantly worrying if I can afford to put electric on. It’s like I’ve got in today and I had no electric so I then had to put my emergency in and then I know that that emergency is going to get me through probably tomorrow and then Friday I’ll return home from work and I won’t have any electric again so then I’ll have to go down and get some. On a weekend, especially on a weekend, it runs out on a Saturday but it will never run out on a Sunday and it won’t run out after 7pm, I believe, in the evening. So if it runs out, say, at 7:15pm on a Saturday, evening, it will then still go through Sunday, so by the time Monday morning 9:00am gets here, I then have to put on, say if I’ve used my emergency, I’d have to make sure I’ve got the £12 to cover my emergency and then whatever that has used, Saturday and Sunday, which would take me up to probably £23, £24.”

Tenant B

Concluding remarks

- Recognition justice – low income households manage affordability through self-deprivation.
- Procedural justice issues – Policy is driven by thermal comfort issues.
- Distributional justice issues – exacerbated by self deprivation.
- Energy affordability is not just an energy problem.