

# Gill Furniss and Rebecca Long-Bailey comments on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day

## **Gill**

**Furniss MP, Labour's Shadow Business Minister**, commenting on Fuel Poverty Awareness

Day, said:

"Fuel poverty

affects four million households in the UK. This has a detrimental effect on people's lives – both physically and mentally. Cold homes impact young people's

ability to study and socialise, and casts a shadow over vulnerable older people

who don't want to admit they are struggling to heat their homes.

"There are

also huge financial implications for our NHS. It is estimated that suffering from cold-related ill health costs the NHS £1.36 billion each year, and if the issue is not addressed properly, in the next 15 years £22 billion will have to be spent by the NHS to tackle ill-health related to cold homes.

"We welcome

the Government's shift in focus towards fuel poverty; however, there is no significant funding to back these announcements. There has been a shocking decline in funding available for energy efficiency measures and some of the most vulnerable fuel poor households are receiving no help at all.

"In my own

constituency of Sheffield, Brightside, and Hillsborough there are 7,241 households in fuel poverty. Whilst there have been fantastic local initiatives

to help those in need, these efforts are hindered by a lack of Government support.

"As we

mark Fuel Poverty Awareness Day, we know that Theresa May's government has slashed energy efficiency incentives, while offering meagre funding to support households in fuel poverty.

"The Labour

Party has made a commitment to end fuel poverty by making energy efficiency an

infrastructure priority and promising to insulate 4 million homes, as well as providing support for those struggling with their energy bills so that nobody has to live in a cold, damp home.'"

## **Rebecca**

**Long-Bailey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State of Business, Energy and**

**Industrial Strategy**, said:

“I am calling upon The Government to make support and investment into the industry surrounding home and premises insulation a key infrastructure priority.

“This makes clear moral sense in terms of ensuring that individuals, families and businesses have access to one of our most basic human needs: warmth. Aside from this however there is a clear economic case too.

“The return on investing in energy efficiency is even better than HS2, creating money for the taxpayer with £1.27 returned for every £1 spent, saves money for the NHS and will create tens of thousands of jobs in SMEs spread across the country. The fact the Conservatives are slashing investment in this area beggars belief.”

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## **Press release: Construction company to pay £54,000 for polluting East Sussex river**

Interserve Construction Limited (ICL) has been fined £54,000 with £5,955 costs after admitting a single incident of discharging silt-laden water into a tributary of the River Rother in Burwash, East Sussex on 1 October 2014.

ICL was contracted to South East Water over an 18-month period at the Crowhurst Bridge Water Treatment Works to improve South East Water’s ability to manage water treatment. The Environment Agency discovered a brown discharge downstream of the Works after a member of the public reported the discoloured water to them.

Further investigations showed that the river was visibly but locally impacted on a temporary basis.

In mitigation it was stated that this was an isolated incident of 25 minutes duration, during an 18-month contract and that the company was of previous good character. There was no evidence that local wildlife was adversely affected.

David Willis, Environment Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

We take these incidents very seriously and do everything within our powers to safeguard the environment and people that may be affected.

## Contact

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## [China to launch first high-throughput communications satellite in April](#)

China plans to launch Shijian-13, its first high-throughput communications satellite, in April, the China Academy of Space Technology (CAST) said Friday.

The 4.6-tonne satellite, with a message capacity of more than 20 GB, will be carried into orbit by a Long March-3B carrier rocket, according to the CAST.

An increase in satellite throughput will provide better access to the Internet on planes and high-speed trains, said Wang Min, deputy head of the CAST's Institute of Telecommunication Satellite.

For the first time, a large number of domestic components have been used on a communications satellite with an orbital life of 15 years, Wang said. It is also the first time electric propulsion has been used on a Chinese satellite.

Shijian-13 has been transported to the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China's Sichuan Province. After completing in-orbit technical tests, it will be designated as Zhongxing-16.

In 2017, China plans to launch six communications satellites, including Shijian-13 and Shijian-18.

Shijian-18 will be put into orbit by a Long March-5 carrier rocket in June, and will test the DFH-5 satellite platform, Wang said.

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# News story: UK's global role reinforced in new International Defence Engagement Strategy

Launching an ambitious framework for the UK's defence engagement overseas, Sir Michael Fallon and Boris Johnson committed to increasing cooperation with partners across the globe to keep Britain safe.

For the first time, defence engagement was made a core defence task in the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. As a result, Britain is now stepping up its global commitments and leadership in international organisations, including NATO and the UN, as well as with bilateral partners.

Britain's defence policy is becoming more 'International by Design', ensuring that we make our alliances and partnerships central to all that we do.

Defence engagement helps build the robust relationships on which our influence, prosperity and security depend. It enables us to respond to threats and crises when they emerge and strengthens our position as the world's leading soft power.

Our commitment to international Defence Engagement includes:

- Establishing three new regional British Defence Staffs for defence engagement in Gulf, Asia Pacific and West Africa.
- New Defence Sections in Albania and Finland and new Attaché posts in Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia (for the South Caucasus), Qatar, Japan, Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- New Defence Section for the Sahel, covering Senegal, The Gambia, Mali and Niger.
- Increased military exercises with NATO partners and allies including in Ukraine, Poland and Estonia.
- Leading development of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) with Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Norway.
- Exercising and training with partners in the Five Power Defence Arrangements such as Exercise Eastern Venture.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Our increased ambition for Defence Engagement abroad demonstrates the UK's global role.

Whether it's by increasing our military expertise in the Middle East, training Nigerian forces in maritime security, or RAF Typhoons exercising over South Korea, Britain is committed to working internationally to protect our people and interests.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The International Defence Engagement Strategy ensures we get the best value from our brilliant and brave Armed Forces and world-class Diplomatic Service, enabling them to deliver security and prosperity for the British people. This is about sending a clear signal of the UK's intent as a dynamic, agile, cutting-edge global power.

Ahead of the annual Munich Security Conference, which started today, the Foreign and Defence Secretaries reaffirmed the UK's commitment to European security. The Minister for Europe, Sir Alan Duncan, is also attending the conference. As Britain leaves the European Union, the UK is stepping up its global role and leadership in European security.

This year Britain is:

- Leading NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), a Brigade size force ready to respond to any threat.
- Leading NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) in Estonia, where 1000 British troops will deploy alongside other NATO Allies to deter threats.
- Deploying a company size force to Poland, as part of the US' EFP battle group.
- Sending Typhoons to police NATO skies over Bulgaria and Romania.

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## [Paul Nuttall does not stand up for working people – Lavery](#)

**Ian**

**Lavery, Labour's Elections and National Campaign Co-ordinator**, responding to Paul Nuttall's speech to UKIP Spring Conference, said:

"You

cannot trust a word Paul Nuttall says, he'll say anything to try and get elected. His speech today is simply more empty rhetoric from the leader of a failing party that has no answers to the challenges we face.

"Paul

Nuttall does not stand up for working people, just as he does not stand up for the people of Stoke. All he wants is to get to Westminster to back the Tories and privatise our NHS. A vote for him is a vote to break up the health service as we know it."