Fuel Oil Prices

Written Question

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change what estimate he has made of the number of properties in (a) Totnes constituency, (b) the South West and (c) England which do not have mains gas access and which use domestic heating oil.

Charles Hendry (Minister of State (Renewable Energy), Energy and Climate Change)

In 2008, the latest year for which this information is available, there were around 773,000 households in England which had no access to mains gas and that used heating oil as their main heating fuel. Of these households, around 191,000 were located in the South West Government Office Region.

Equivalent figures for the Totnes constituency are not available.

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Written Question

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change if he will commission an inquiry into the reason for recent trends in the price of domestic heating oil.

Charles Hendry (Minister of State (Renewable Energy), Energy and Climate Change)

I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement I gave on 21 January concerning the Off-Grid Energy market. I am keen that the reasons for the high price of domestic heating oil and supply issues this winter are thoroughly investigated by an independent authority. The Office of Fair Trading market study will provide an independent assessment of the off-grid market and establish what further action may be necessary to ensure it works properly. I look forward to seeing its conclusions in advance of next winter so the lessons from this winter can be learned and any necessary changes made.

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