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'Warm banks' spread in UK as heating costs rise – 15th August, 2022

Level 4

The UK is a wealthy country, but people cannot pay energy bills. Electricity and gas bills could rise fourfold this year. Even well paid people are struggling. Lower-paid workers are faced with a stark choice of heating or eating. Many towns are converting libraries into spaces where people can stay warm for free. These are called "heat banks". A UK money-saving expert cannot understand why his country needs warm banks. The UK has hundreds of food banks.

Britons are taking drastic measures. One woman turned off her fridge and is keeping her food in cold water. A man switched off his electric kettle and is drinking cold water. Last winter, a lady sat on a bus all day instead of sitting at home in the cold. People are angry about the record profits oil companies are making. The government is reluctant to tax these. Each year in the UK, cold weather kills around 11,400 people. This figure will increase this year.

Level 5

The UK is a very wealthy country, but people are having difficulties paying energy bills. Electricity and gas bills could rise fourfold this year. Even people on good salaries are feeling the pinch. Lower-paid workers and retirees may be faced with a stark choice of heating or eating. Many towns have a temporary solution. They are converting libraries into spaces where people can stay warm for free. These are called "heat banks". A UK money-saving expert is dumbfounded by the idea of warm banks in his country. The UK already has hundreds of food banks.

Britons are taking drastic measures to avoid rising energy costs. One woman has turned off her fridge and is keeping her food in cold water. A man switched off his electric kettle and is drinking water instead of hot drinks. Last winter, a lady used her free bus pass to sit on a warm bus all day instead of sitting at home in the cold. People are angry with oil companies who are making record profits. The government is reluctant to introduce a one-off tax on these companies. Each year in the UK, around 11,400 deaths are caused by cold weather. This figure will rise further this year.

Level 6

The U.K. is one of the world's richest countries, but people are finding it increasingly difficult to pay energy bills. Electricity and gas bills could rise fourfold by the winter. Even people on good salaries are feeling the pinch. Lower-paid workers and those who have retired may soon be faced with a stark choice of heating or eating. Local governments have devised a makeshift solution. They are converting communal areas like libraries into spaces where people can go to stay warm for free. These are called "heat banks". Money-saving expert Martin Lewis said he is dumbfounded by the idea of warm banks in a supposedly wealthy country. The U.K. already has hundreds of food banks for those who struggle to afford to eat.

Britons are already taking drastic measures to avoid skyrocketing energy costs. One woman has disconnected her refrigerator and is storing perishable goods in cold water. A man has turned off his electric kettle and is drinking water instead of hot coffee. Last winter, an older lady used her free bus pass to sit on a warm bus all day instead of sitting at home in the cold. Many people are furious with the government and fossil fuel companies. Giant oil companies are making record profits, and the government is reluctant to implement a one-off "windfall tax". The U.K.'s National Energy Action group said that each year, around 11,400 deaths are caused by cold weather. They predict this figure will rise further this year.