Political power and the development of the GB renewable heat incentive

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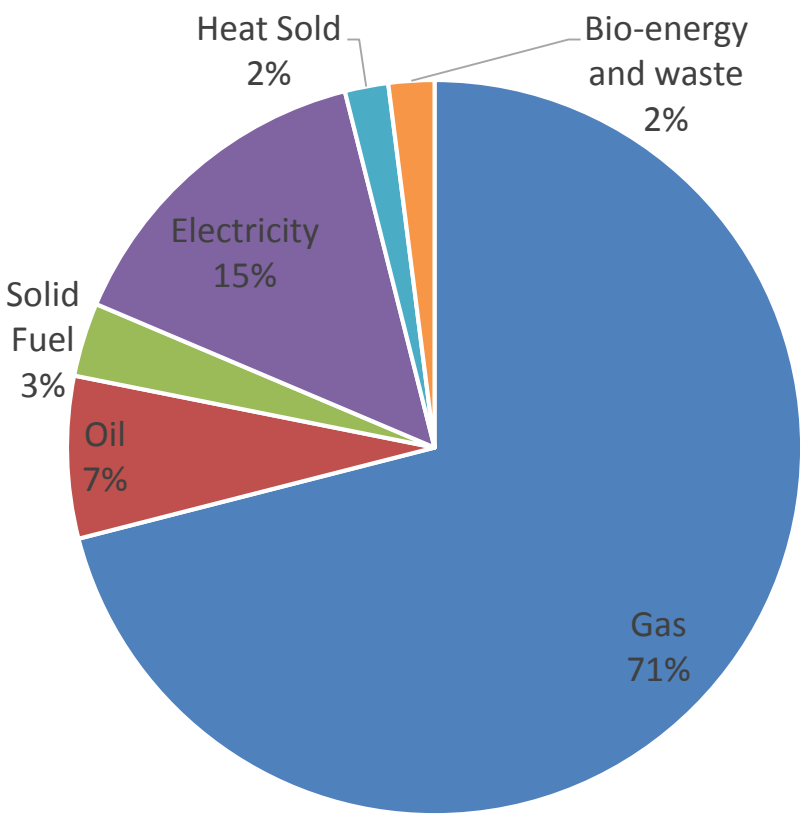
Introduction

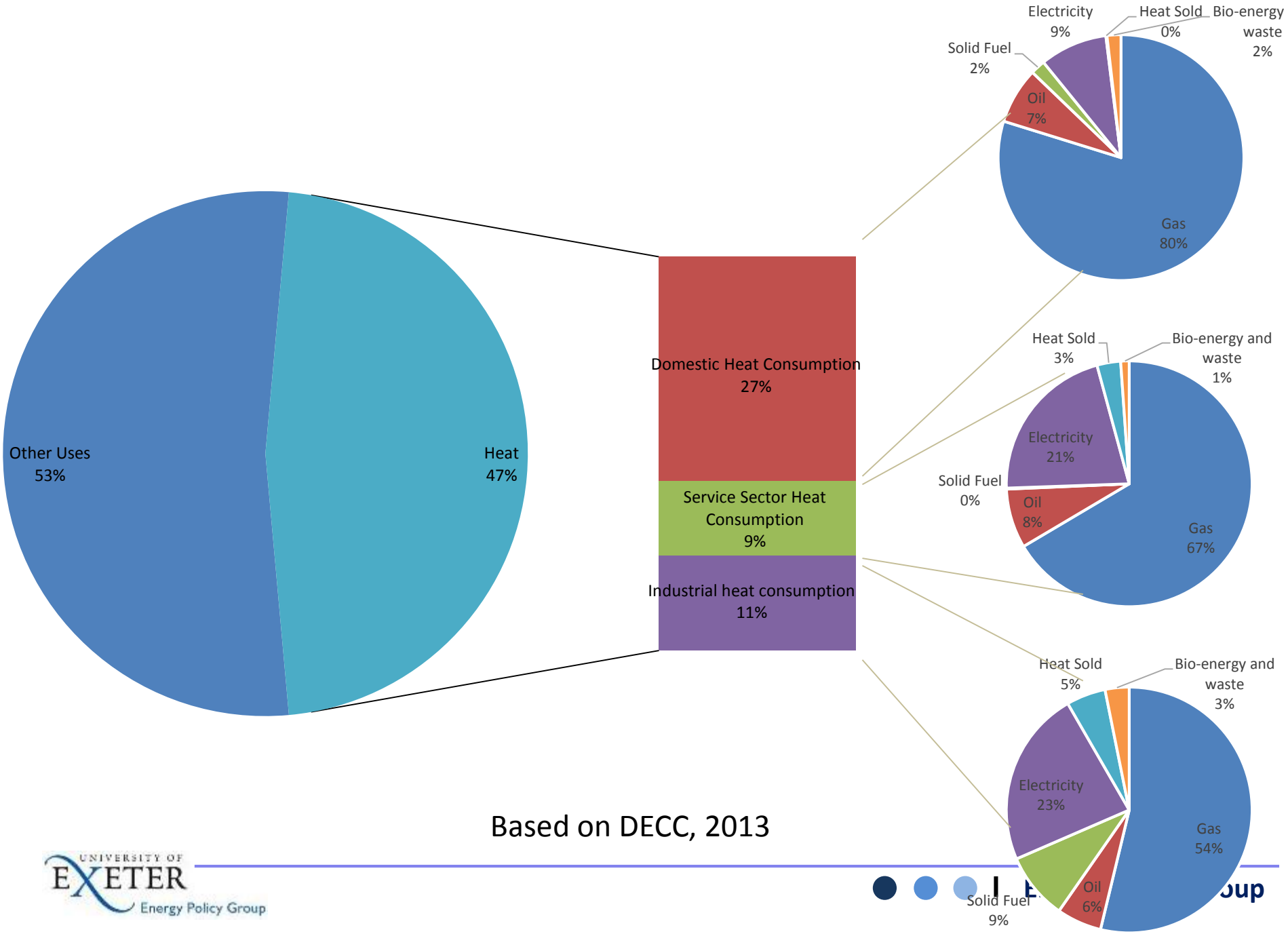
- Setting the scene, why is heat important?
- Theoretical context
- Methods
- Results and conclusions
- What's next?

Why is heat so important?

- Globally, around half of all energy demand (IEA, 2014)
- A similar level in the UK (DECC, 2013)
- UK heavily reliant on gas
  - 2nd highest penetration of gas heating in the world
  - 85% of homes use gas



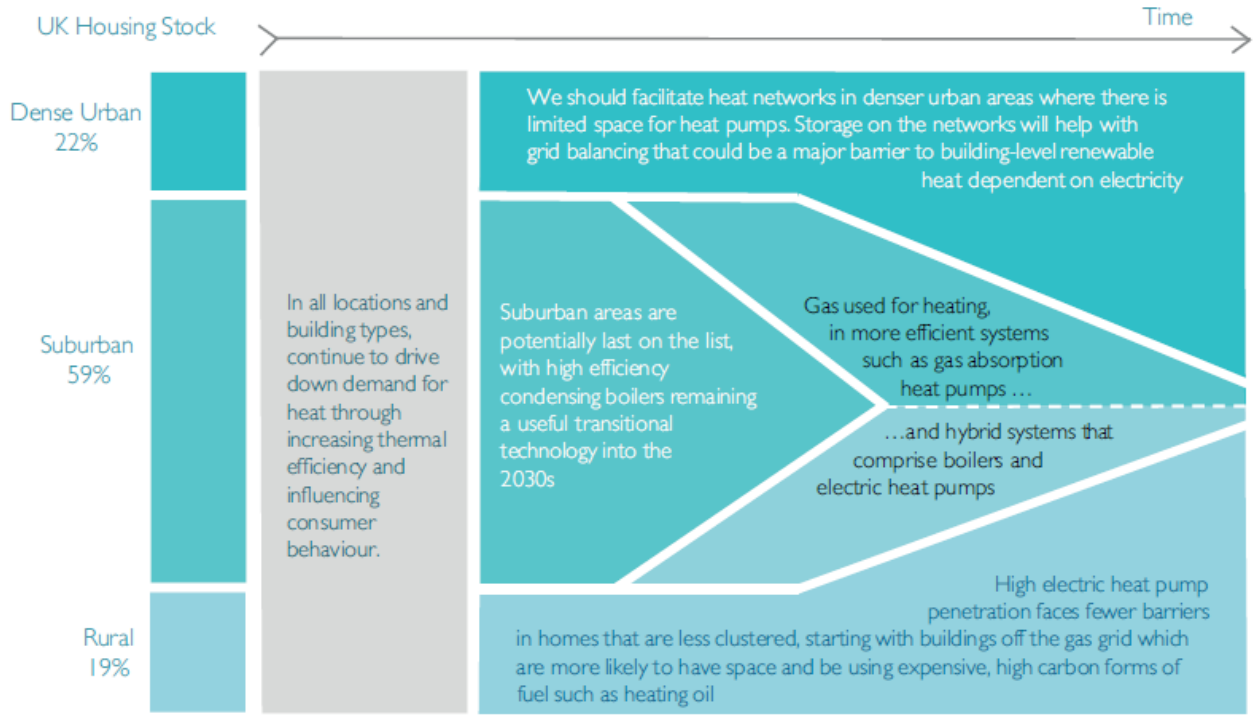
DECC, 2013



Based on DECC, 2013

A transformation of the heating sector is required

- 80% carbon target implies full decarbonisation of heating sector (CCC, 2015, DECC, 2013)
- UK currently a net gas importer at 50% levels, likely to increase (DECC, 2015)

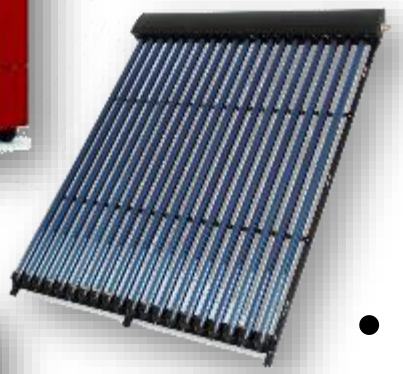


DECC, 2013 b

Socio-political power is an important aspect of system transformations

- 'Power' is recognised as being missing from much of the debate around transformations (e.g. Shove & Walker, 2010, Markard et al., 2016)
- Lukes (2005) explains that *'there is no agreement about how to define it, how to conceive it, how to study it and, if it can be measured, how to measure it [power]'* (p61).
- By power, I simply refer to the ability of actors to affect policy and regulation in the heat sector.
- Employed an approach called 'Four dimension of power' (Haugaard and Ryan, 2012)

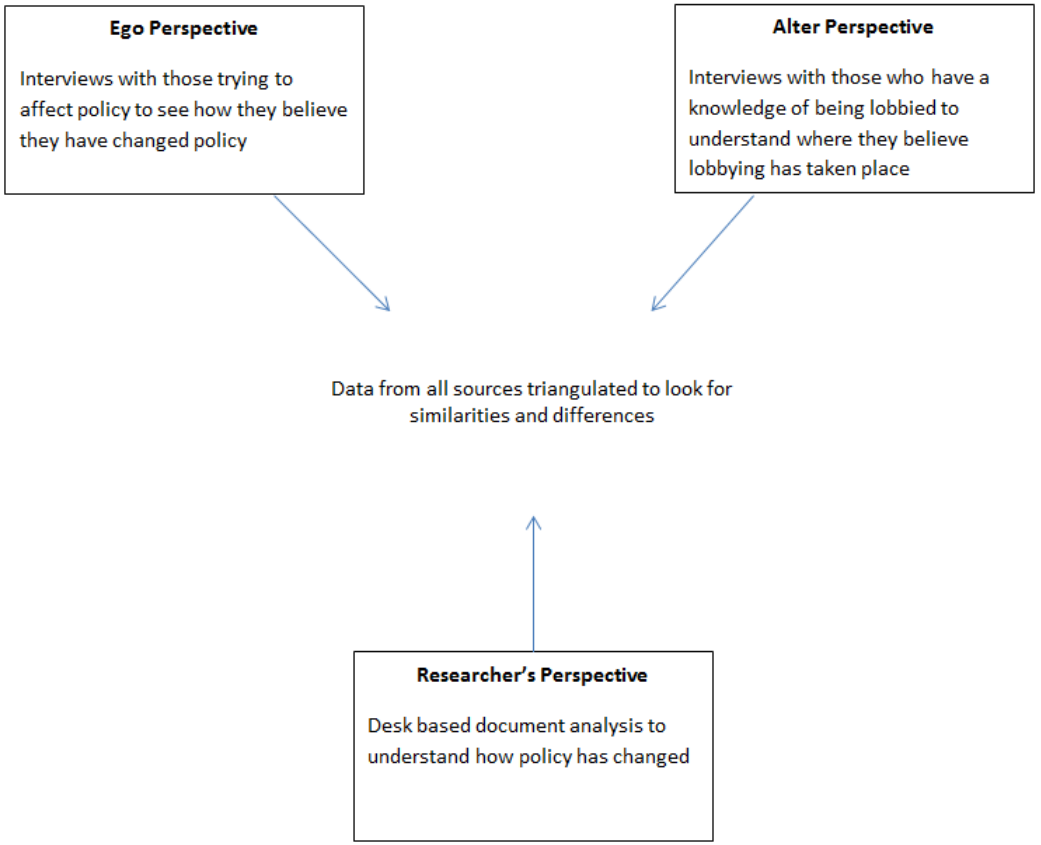
Research focus - The UK Renewable Heat Incentive



- A scheme to begin the transformation to sustainable heat
  - 12% renewable heat target for 2020
- Non-domestic opened Nov 2011
  - 20 year tariffs
  - Technology and size specific
- Domestic April 2014
  - Technology specific
  - 'Deemed' heat use

Method

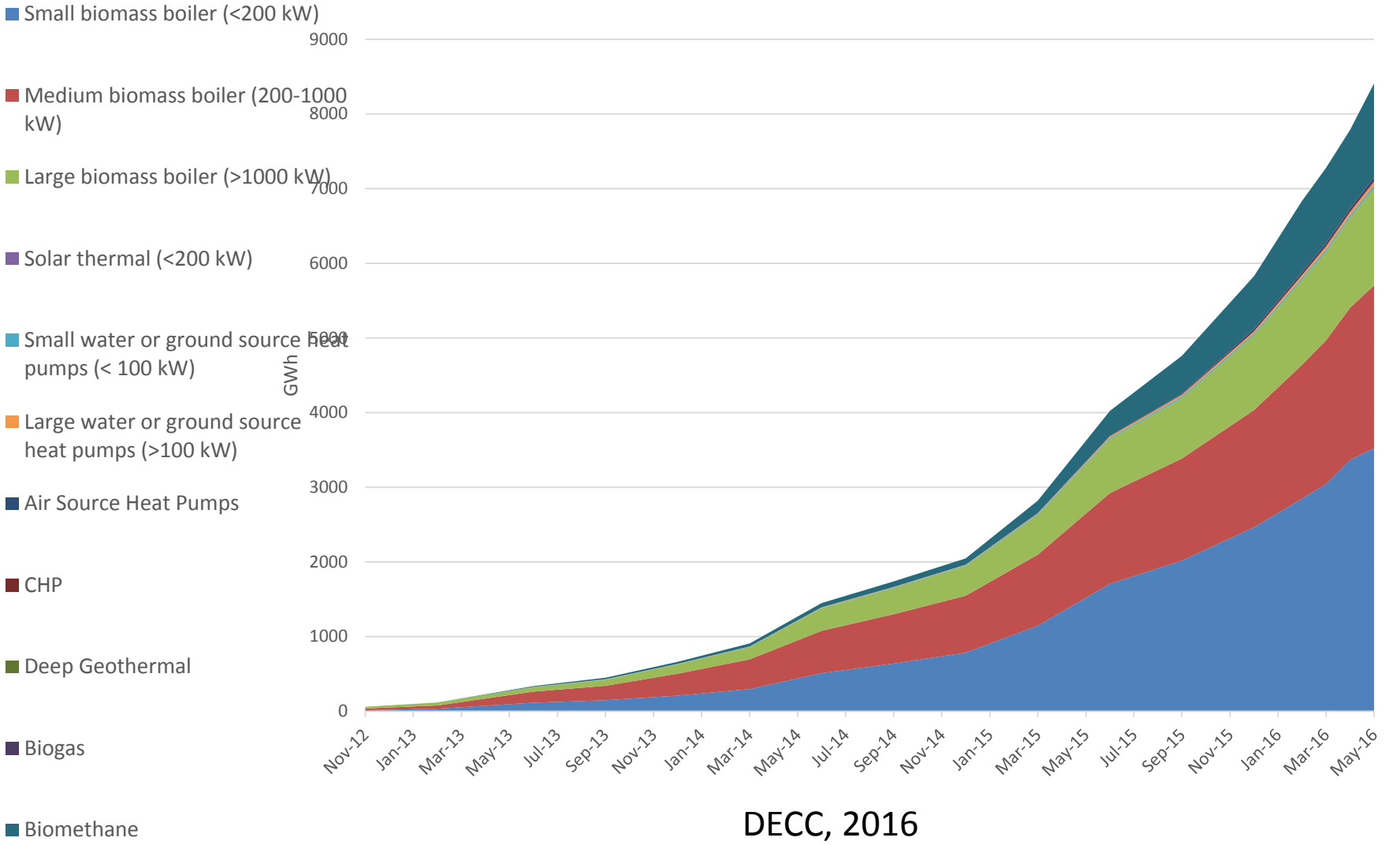
- Used the 'EAR' instrument (Arts, 1999)
- Fundamentally interviews with lobbyists, policy makers and document analysis
- Triangulation



Key policy changes in the RHI

- ***Policy change 1: The power of the Renewable Energy Association to speed up the introduction of the RHI***
- *Policy change 2: Funding the RHI through general taxation*
- *Policy change 3: The maintenance of the RHI in the coalition Government*
- ***Policy change 4: The mandarin and the near death of the RHI (2010-2011)***
- *Policy change 5: The over rewarding of biomass*
- *Policy change 6: Further support for biomass*
- ***Policy change 7: Extra support for biomethane***

Biomass is dominating the non-domestic scheme



DECC, 2016

Methodological Issues

- Interviewees on both sides will have interests, nothing can be taken at face value
- Policy success doesn't indicate influence, luck and circumstance are important factors
- Second phase of research would strengthen methodology
  - Triangulation followed by:
    - Secondary interviews
    - Further more detailed document analysis

Conclusions

- UK heat policy is power laden
  - There have been numerous attempts to influence policy with impacts on the transformation
- Power is not just associated with lobbyists but also civil servants, politicians
- The role of knowledge/evidence is particularly important when considering power
- Socio-political power must be considered by policy makers

What's next?

- Write up thesis including other aspects
- Complete UKERC project 'Heat, Incumbency and Transformations'
  - 24 months
  - Focus on the heat sector and incumbent companies
- Build academic capacity around UK/global heat governance

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