

Addressing Fuel Poverty Amongst London Private Renters

28% of Londoners are private renters, and the number living in poverty[1] has more than doubled since 2006 – now almost a million.

Around a third of London renters are living in fuel poverty, that's about 10 per cent of all fuel poor households in England.

Cold homes lead to poor health, increasing the risk of disease and death for all age groups. Health impacts include mental health issues, as well as respiratory and circulatory problems. It is also a major factor in Excess Winter Deaths, which are estimated to be three times higher in the coldest 25 per cent of homes than in the warmest 25 per cent.

In London, an estimated 82,000 privately rented homes are associated with excess cold, costing the NHS £18.9m per year[2]. In a Feb 2019 report[3] the Committee on Climate Change warns that the UK's legally-binding climate change targets will not be met without the near-complete elimination of greenhouse gas emissions from UK homes. Energy use in homes accounts for 14% of total UK emissions with private rented homes being the most energy inefficient.

The London Mayor is in a unique position to make a real impact on reducing fuel poverty in London by facilitating action through the Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations 2018[4].

The Mayor should commit to:

-  A major London-wide awareness-raising campaign about the Regulations targeted at private renters
-  Designating at least 50% of the Mayor's Warmer Homes Fund for private rented homes
-  Ensuring that rents are not increased after works are done through the Warmer Homes Fund
-  Working with local authorities to increase effective enforcement against landlords letting cold homes
-  Working with social prescribing health partnerships to recognise the health impact of cold homes and ensure that improving thermal efficiency in private tenants' homes is a key feature in their work plans

[1] Fuel Poverty means that a household is forced below the poverty line as a result of the cost of using energy in their home. Fuel poverty among private renters is caused by low incomes/benefit caps, high fuel prices, high rents, poor energy efficiency and disrepair.

[2] Building Research Establishment, 2011, The Health Costs of Cold Dwellings

[3] 'UK housing: Fit for the future?'

[4] **From 1 April 2020 it will be unlawful to let any properties that are energy rated below E. This is a requirement under the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015. (There are certain exemptions)**