

**Tom Copley AM | LONDONASSEMBLYLABOUR**

*Working hard for Londoners*

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26th February 2018

Dear Sadiq,

### **Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)**

I am writing to ask you to support a £5,000 per property cost cap for landlords to bring their properties up to the domestic minimum level of energy efficiency in your Fuel Poverty Action Plan, which is expected to be published later this year.

As you are aware, London has the highest number of private rented sector (PRS) tenants in the country, and private tenants are particularly at risk of fuel poverty. Such fuel poverty has a profound impact on the health of an estimated 335,000 households in London that are unable to sufficiently heat their homes.<sup>1</sup> Worryingly, the latest figures show that approximately 9,000 people died during the winter of 2014/2015, as a result of living in a cold home.<sup>2</sup>

Your recent draft Fuel Poverty Action Plan for London estimates that between 2011 and 2016 there were 1,300 to 4,000 Excess Winter Deaths in London where the inability to heat homes adequately may have been a contributory factor.<sup>3</sup> I agree with you that this is unacceptable.

Therefore, I welcome the Government's announcement that from April 2019, Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) will prohibit private landlords from renting properties with energy performance certificates below band E in England and Wales. I also welcome the Government's proposal to remove the existing 'no cost to the landlord' exemption and introduce a 'landlord funding contribution' component where a landlord is unable to obtain suitable 'no cost' funding.

However, the Government now intends to introduce lower a cap of £2,500 on the amount any landlord would need to invest on an individual property.<sup>4</sup> This is not sufficient to address fuel poverty in London. To ensure urgent social and environmental work is carried out as soon as possible, a coalition of civil society partners is calling on the Government to increase the cap to £5,000 per

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<sup>1</sup> Mayor of London: Draft Fuel Poverty Action Plan for London (August 2017)  
[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft\\_fuel\\_poverty\\_action\\_plan.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft_fuel_poverty_action_plan.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> BEIS: Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report (2017),  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/639118/Fuel\\_Poverty\\_Statistics\\_Report\\_2017\\_revised\\_August.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/639118/Fuel_Poverty_Statistics_Report_2017_revised_August.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Draft Fuel Poverty Action Plan for London

<sup>4</sup> Government consultation: Domestic Private Rented Sector minimum level of energy efficiency (December 2017)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/domestic-private-rented-sector-minimum-level-of-energy-efficiency>

property. A higher cap would lead to further savings for tenants in energy bills, and landlords would benefit from an increase in their property value.

The Government's own assessment warned that the lower cap means only 139,200 households in England and Wales will benefit from better insulation by April 2020. That is 121,000 fewer than if the cap was at £5,000.<sup>5</sup> By definition, the properties that can't reach band E under the £2,500 cost cap will be the worst-performing ones, leaving the most vulnerable unprotected.

Earlier this month, the Assembly agreed a motion<sup>6</sup> calling on you to support the £5,000 cost cap in the Fuel Poverty Action Plan, and to write to the Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth to urge her Department to adopt the higher cost cap to ensure that some of the most vulnerable Londoners are not left in dangerous and unhealthy homes any longer.

In the face of such insufficient national action, something we have come to expect under this Government, I call on you to take action to end fuel poverty in London.

Yours sincerely,



**Tom Copley AM**

Londonwide Assembly Member

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<sup>5</sup> BEIS: Amending The Private rented Sector Energy Efficiency Regulations, Consultation Stage Impact Assessment (December 2017)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/669214/PRS\\_Consultation\\_stage\\_IA.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/669214/PRS_Consultation_stage_IA.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Assembly calls for £5,000 cost cap on landlord funding contribution (February 2018) <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/assembly/assembly-calls-for-5000-cost-cap>