

Gill Furniss and Rebecca Long-Bailey comments on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day

Gill

Furniss MP, Labour's Shadow Business Minister, commenting on Fuel Poverty Awareness

Day, said:

"Fuel poverty

affects four million households in the UK. This has a detrimental effect on people's lives – both physically and mentally. Cold homes impact young people's

ability to study and socialise, and casts a shadow over vulnerable older people

who don't want to admit they are struggling to heat their homes.

"There are

also huge financial implications for our NHS. It is estimated that suffering from cold-related ill health costs the NHS £1.36 billion each year, and if the issue is not addressed properly, in the next 15 years £22 billion will have to be spent by the NHS to tackle ill-health related to cold homes.

"We welcome

the Government's shift in focus towards fuel poverty; however, there is no significant funding to back these announcements. There has been a shocking decline in funding available for energy efficiency measures and some of the most vulnerable fuel poor households are receiving no help at all.

"In my own

constituency of Sheffield, Brightside, and Hillsborough there are 7,241 households in fuel poverty. Whilst there have been fantastic local initiatives

to help those in need, these efforts are hindered by a lack of Government support.

"As we

mark Fuel Poverty Awareness Day, we know that Theresa May's government has slashed energy efficiency incentives, while offering meagre funding to support households in fuel poverty.

"The Labour

Party has made a commitment to end fuel poverty by making energy efficiency an

infrastructure priority and promising to insulate 4 million homes, as well as providing support for those struggling with their energy bills so that nobody has to live in a cold, damp home.'"

Rebecca

Long-Bailey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State of Business, Energy and

Industrial Strategy, said:

“I am calling upon The Government to make support and investment into the industry surrounding home and premises insulation a key infrastructure priority.

“This makes clear moral sense in terms of ensuring that individuals, families and businesses have access to one of our most basic human needs: warmth. Aside from this however there is a clear economic case too.

“The return on investing in energy efficiency is even better than HS2, creating money for the taxpayer with £1.27 returned for every £1 spent, saves money for the NHS and will create tens of thousands of jobs in SMEs spread across the country. The fact the Conservatives are slashing investment in this area beggars belief.”