



Work and Pensions Committee

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From the Chair

22 February 2017

David R Blakemore
Chair
Committee on Fuel Poverty
3 Whitehall Place
London, SW1A 2AW

Dear Mr Blakemore

Thank you for your interest in our report on Intergenerational Fairness and in particular for your positive response to our conclusions on Winter Fuel Payment.

I welcome your Committee's advocacy of a more strategic and cost-effective approach to achieving the Government's fuel poverty goals and agree that we need to have a broad and evidence-based cross-party debate on how expenditure on Winter Fuel Payment can be better focused to reduce fuel poverty and increase energy efficiency.

Our report welcomed the improvements in pensioner incomes seen in recent years, which have been accompanied by sizeable reductions in pensioner fuel poverty. Over the same period the fuel poverty rate among non-pensioner households has remained stubbornly high.

Although there is a strong case for reforming the provision of fuel cost support in light of this, it is vital to ensure that recent improvements in pensioner fuel poverty are not jeopardised and that any proposal for change seeks to minimise the risk of vulnerable pensioners who continue to need such help missing out on it, for example by failing to take it up.

I look forward to the Government taking action to address the issues you have raised. The Work and Pensions Committee will of course take a close interest in any specific proposals that you or others may bring forward to reform the role that benefit payments play in the fight against fuel poverty.

Best wishes,

Rt Hon Frank Field MP
Chair