

Hands up if your heating has come on yet? Ours has. In fact I snuck it on at one point during the early weeks of September before being told off by him indoors with some additional mutterings about how it is wrong to turn on the heating before October.

With the seasonal change comes a renewed sense to get that cosy feeling of wrapping up warm and getting the pipes working after months of laying dormant

For many though, myself included, it is far too often that we take that warmth for granted. Despite adequate housing being ensured in human rights law, people sadly die every year from the cold, often relating to a worry over energy fuel costs. Warmth is paramount to good health, helping avoid problems such as heart attacks, strokes or pneumonia. It is also a foundation of personal wellbeing and enables people to maintain their independence. Its importance cannot be understated.

Which is why it bothers me when energy companies do not treat their customers fairly. Supplying companies are protected from fluctuations in the price of wholesale energy as they buy their energy up to two years in advance and prices remain significantly lower than in 2015 yet that is rarely transferred to the customer and it is the poor and vulnerable that suffer as a result.

So I was delighted when last week the Prime Minister got tough on energy companies saying the Government will bring forward legislation to extend the cap on energy prices for an extra 12 million consumers on standard variable tariffs. By putting the heat back on the companies, customers will see a major average saving of £100 a year. This will help the most vulnerable feel they can put their heating on, like the rest of us do, and stay warm and healthy throughout these dark cold days.