

Landlords

Landlords are not allowed to profit from supplying energy, including by prepayment meters – the maximum charge for them to sell on gas or electricity is the same as the amount they pay the energy company. You, or a tenant's association, can ask for a breakdown of the costs or even to see the bills they pay. If there's more than one tenant in a property, they have to explain how the individual costs are calculated, including for common areas as well.

However:

- Lots of people are afraid to ask for this for fear of eviction, and ending up somewhere even worse. This risk is serious especially in private or other insecure tenancies, and you should consider alternatives and organise outside support before confronting a landlord. Fuel Poverty Action may be able to help find people to support you in this situation.
- The landlord is allowed to recover charges for maintenance and upkeep of supply and for admin eg reading meters, and this is not covered by the maximum resale price.
- Tenants associations and housing rights groups are usually the best way to deal with landlords.

The **Child Poverty Action Group's *Fuel Rights Handbook*** says that "if you encounter continual problems with your landlord's approach to reselling electricity or gas, you could obtain your own supply directly from a supplier." The companies are obliged to provide a supply, with your own meter. You may need to pay connection charges, but if the landlord has persistently breached your tenancy agreement you might be able to get the connection charges back from them as compensation.

Draughty or damp privately rented home? What are your rights?

Everyone knows that there is a link between housing and fuel poverty. In cities like London where rents are so high, many tenants are forced to take houses which are draughty, have single glazing, a poor boiler, which all worsen fuel poverty, however they have no real choice about where they rent.

-There is no legal obligation on a landlord to make 'improvements' - just repairs. Landlords will typically see energy efficiency measures as 'improvements' -- meaning there is no legal obligation to make homes less cold or fix draughts.

-However, if you have a serious mould or damp problem and you have notified your landlord who has failed to act to amend the situation (in 28 days since the notice) you may be eligible for a court injunction forcing your landlord to

act. If you have medical evidence of the impact of the mould on your health you may also be eligible to receive legal aid for your claim.

-Many tenants don't report problems or request improvements for fear of eviction but legally your landlord must give you valid notice (8 weeks), get a court order and also a bailiff to remove you - otherwise they are breaking the law.

There is a network of people prepared to help each other prevent evictions. If you need help on the doorstep, or are ready to help others in that situation, please get in touch with [Radical Housing Network \(London\)](#), [Hands off Our Homes \(Leeds\)](#), [Digs \(Hackney\)](#), [Housing Action Southwark and Lambeth](#).