



A grassroots campaign taking action against mammoth fuel bills and working towards an affordable, sustainable and democratic energy system

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The Prime Minister
10 Downing St
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Dear Prime Minister,

On Monday this week you lost your place in your speech to the CBI, and repeatedly asked them, "Forgive me", "Forgive me" as you shuffled through your pile of papers.

But that is not what you should be asking forgiveness for.

Losing your place in a pile of papers is forgivable. It is not forgivable to cause the deaths of thousands of people who cannot afford to heat their homes.

As you know, each year, over ten thousand UK residents, largely pensioners and disabled people die miserable, lonely deaths in cold homes. As you know, respiratory illnesses - like Covid-19 - are made worse by cold, damp living conditions.

There will be more such tragic, avoidable deaths this year.

We can forgive you for abandoning the Green Homes Grant which was supposed to insulate our homes, making them warmer, bringing down our bills, and cutting carbon emissions. That scheme was ill-conceived, inadequate and badly managed. But we cannot forgive you for putting nothing in its place, while people continue to die in homes which are badly insulated and badly repaired.

We cannot forgive you for suspending the triple lock on pensions, or for cutting the essential £20 uplift on Universal Credit, or for never extending this uplift to disability benefits despite the huge extra costs imposed on disabled people by Covid-19.

You will not be forgiven for selling off vast swathes of the NHS to private interests, so that even when our lives are at stake we can no longer be sure of getting the help we need from GPs, the ambulance service, or hospitals. Nor will people forget that while clapping for medical and care staff you failed to provide the PPE that they needed to stay alive and to continue doing their jobs.

Your government constantly claims that there is no money for the services, infrastructure, and support that UK residents need. Yet a wealth tax on the richest 1% of households in Britain – those with fortunes in the excess of £3.6m – could create at least an additional £70 billion a year.

Thirty UK millionaires are *asking* for their billions to be used to support people who are struggling to survive. They have told the chancellor, “We know where you can find that money – tax wealth holders like us.”

You told the world at COP26 that every country must “pull out all the stops” to prevent the “absolute disaster” of failing on climate change. That is true. The deaths already resulting round the world from droughts, floods, wildfires, and climate-related famines are many times more than the deaths we are suffering here from fuel poverty - and extreme weather due to the changing climate is adding to the death toll in our homes as well. Yet you are funding a huge gas project in Mozambique with \$1billion of UK taxpayers money. This will cause more deaths.

You have told us that we must pay more in our bills and pay for new equipment to cut down the carbon emissions from our homes - yet now, straight after Glasgow, you’ve announced plans to subsidise domestic flights to London from Newquay and Dundee. This too will cause more deaths.

So no, Prime Minister, you will not be forgiven.

To prevent further tragic, avoidable, and miserable deaths this winter, we need a wide range of measures including

- a reversal of the pricing system that now forces the poorest households to pay more per unit of energy than their wealthy neighbours pay,
- a reversal of cuts to benefits, pensions, and take-home wages,
- a windfall tax on the soaring profits of corporations benefiting from the rising price of gas, and
- a wealth tax.
- The proceeds to be used for repair, draught-proofing and deep retrofitting of the UK’s leaky homes, installation of low carbon heating systems without cost to households who could not otherwise not afford it, and immediate relief of poverty.

Yours faithfully,

Fuel Poverty Action