

Investing in Health and Housing in Wales



Those at greatest risk from poor housing are:



Health and Well-being Impacts

10% of excess winter deaths can be attributed to **fuel poverty**



People who live in homes which are cold, damp and unsafe are more at risk of:

- > poor physical and mental health and well-being
- > cancers, circulatory, cardiovascular and respiratory ill-health
- > more falls and serious injury
- > arthritic and rheumatic conditions



Unhealthy homes



18% of homes pose an unacceptable risk to health



Cold homes impact on physical health, social isolation, stress, and financial capability



Damp or mouldy homes increase **respiratory problems** by 30-50%, mainly in children



12% of households are in fuel poverty



Unsuitable homes



3 in 4 over 65s live in their own home



30% of over 65s and **50% of over 80s** have a fall each year



Accidental injuries are a leading cause of death for children and young people



Overcrowding is linked to stress, alcohol abuse and depression



Homelessness

Those with **4+ Adverse Childhood Experiences** are **16 times more likely** to become homeless



A third of homelessness is caused by a health problem

Costs to the NHS and Costs to Society

Poor quality housing in Wales costs per year:



The NHS

> £95m
(first year treatment costs)

> £1bn
(distress, economy, life-long care, welfare, finances)

Welsh society

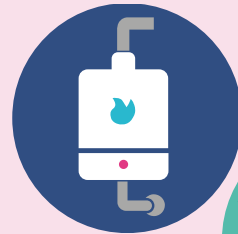


The cost to mitigate poor housing is:



£584m

in repairs, improvements, reducing falls and cold hazards



The removal of hazards in the home offers:



Payback in **6 years** for immediate health savings



Payback in just over **6 months** for societal savings



Priority Areas for Preventative Action



Housing quality

- Healthy, safe and well managed homes regardless of tenure
- Eliminate cold, damp and mouldy homes, and improve ventilation
- Energy efficiency measures and fuel poverty schemes
- Support vulnerable households instead of area-based interventions
- Good home quality standards, particularly in the privately rented sector
- Improve planning through housing strategies and Health Impact Assessment



Suitable housing

- Integrating adaptations with personal health care plans
- Home modifications and adaptations based on need, not location or tenure
- Falls prevention programmes
- Support independence for older people through extra care schemes
- Homes that promote social inclusion
- Tackle overcrowding



Homelessness

- Early intervention and prevention e.g. tackling Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Co-ordinated approaches to improve access to health and care services
- Person-centred approaches taking services to people and supporting people into homes e.g. avoiding complex systems, more assertive outreach, Housing First
- Raise awareness at a local level of what benefits and support people are entitled to receive



Housing inequality

- Develop evidence on the cost and impact of poor housing on health and society
- Identify those with the greatest need through partnership working and shared intelligence



Partnerships

- Alignment of housing, health and social care, maximising collaboration and integration
- Increased involvement of housing sector in partnerships e.g. Regional Partnership Boards

Return on Investment



Housing quality

£1 spent on central heating generates 42p in health benefits



3.9% reduction in GP visits for respiratory conditions in **Nest scheme** beneficiaries (compared to 9.8% increase in the control group)



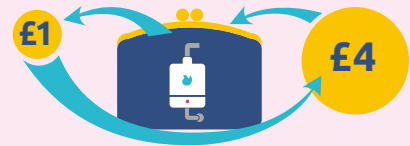
£1 spent on insulation interventions provides a return of **£1.87¹**



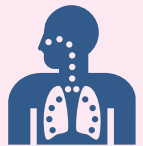
Improving **heating and ventilation** improves asthma in children and is cost-effective



£1 spent on improving warmth in vulnerable households results in **£4** of health benefits



39% fewer hospital admissions for cardiorespiratory conditions and injuries in those with **upgraded houses**



Unsuitable homes



Falls prevention results in pay back in less than 3 years

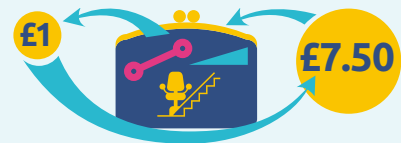


Adaptations to reduce falls pay back in 5-6 years in NHS costs



Home modifications result in 26% fewer injuries requiring medical treatment (caused by falls) per year

£1 spent on adaptations prior to hospital discharge generates **£7.50** of cost savings for health and social care



Extra care schemes reduce NHS health costs by **£1,786** per person per year



Homelessness

Housing First models for homeless individuals with complex needs returns **£3.60** for every **£1** spent



Every **£1 invested** in moving people out of homelessness generates **£2.80** in benefits



Preventing homelessness results in savings of **~£9,266 per person** compared to allowing homelessness to persist for 12 months

¹ Translated from findings of intervention carried out in New Zealand.

The information in this infographic is taken from the report: **Making a Difference – Housing and Health: A Case for Investment**

For more information contact:

Building Research Establishment Ltd • Ian Watson
ian.watson@cadshs.co.uk

Public Health Wales • Louise Woodfine
louise.woodfine@wales.nhs.uk



GIG Cymru NHS WALES | Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales

