



Response to the London Assembly's Environment Committee investigation into increasing insulation levels in London's homes

This submission is from the insulation industry and has been produced by the National Insulation Association (NIA). The NIA represents the manufacturers and installers of insulation products including cavity and solid wall insulation, loft insulation and other innovative products. We have consulted widely in producing this response and have no objection to its contents being made public.

We welcome this investigation by the Environment Committee and hope this will aid in overcoming the traditional scenario where Londoners benefit less from insulation and related national schemes and policies than those living in other areas. The reasons for this are outlined in our responses to the detailed questions below.

If further information or a direct meeting would be helpful then please do not hesitate to contact us, contact details are provided at the end of this document.

1. Do you or your members believe that there are particular difficulties in operating insulation schemes in London?

Yes. There are specific issues in relation to operating in London faced by insulation contractors. However, there are two key areas that need to be addressed if the present level of insulation installations in London's homes is to be significantly increased.

- **Access** – there are a number of issues which make access to properties in London more problematic than in other areas of the country. In particular, there are major issues in relation to parking and the costs of driving in inner London boroughs. This is particularly acute in certain central London boroughs such as Westminster. A cohesive and London wide approach must be adopted which overcomes parking barriers not only at the time of installation but to gain access to carry out pre installation surveys.

In addition, it would be helpful if work could be grouped and allocated to installers in a way which would enable a number of homes in close proximity to one another to be done at the same time. This would reduce the number of trips into London and the amount of travelling around London.

- **Price** – costs in London are greater than elsewhere in the country yet this is not recognised in the payment terms of national policies and schemes such as the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target. Therefore a suitable London weighting is required to ensure that the additional costs associated with working in London are equitably reflected.

2. What kind of regional or local council support would be useful in helping to increase the delivery of insulation in London?

As outlined above the key areas which must be overcome are the price differential and access/parking restrictions. One approach to achieving this would be to adopt a whole house approach. The problem of access restrictions could be reduced if more than one measure was carried out in a property at the same time. This need not be limited to insulation measures but could also include a number of other measures which would benefit householders. For example whole house programmes which in addition to insulation measures provide decent homes survey, radiator panels, security measures, advice etc.

3. Are you aware of any programmes that have been particularly successful in addressing 'hard to treat' homes such as solid walled homes, flats, and the privately rented sector?

We are aware of programmes by boroughs in London which have overcome the above issues with a great deal of success. Further information on these can be supplied upon request.

a) What further actions are needed to increase the market for these kinds of insulations?

London has a very high proportion of solid wall properties when compared to the rest of the country. No major scheme adequately incentivises higher cost measures such as solid wall insulation and there are no solid wall solutions available on Warm Front for example. Therefore clear financial assistance to make such higher cost measures more attractive is required. In addition as such measures take more time to install than traditional insulation, then the access restrictions are even more acute.

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