

private rental the annual cash saving would be £11,809,600. Therefore, for every year that this date is brought forward, there would be a cash injection of nearly £12 million into the Welsh economy.

The work of refurbishing and supply of materials would also create decent local jobs throughout Wales at a difficult time.

In addition to the licencing requirements currently set out in section 10(3) we believe that there should be a requirement on the applicant to ensure that the properties to be rented meet a minimum standard of energy efficiency - that the property should be 'fit and proper' as well as the person letting them. This could be enacted through the addition of a section in this part of the bill.

If it is not possible to do this directly within this bill, a reference to minimum standard for rental accommodation, including the energy efficiency of homes, must explicitly be added to the issues that should be included in a Ministerial Code of Practice as set out in section 28.

However for clarity and certainty, and in order to act as soon as possible to improve sub-standard private rental homes, we would urge the committee to consider including this on the face of the bill itself rather than wait for a code of practice at the discretion of a Minister.

The Sustainable Development impact assessment (Explanatory Memorandum 8.16-8.18) states "**Tenants in the private rented sector are expected to experience improvement management of their accommodation, with reduced heating bills if better insulation is installed.**" (8.18)
As this legislation currently reads, there is no direct link between this statement and what is proposed.

Legislation is essential to ensure private rented properties meet a basic standard of energy efficiency and protect householders who live in the very worst insulated accommodation from high energy bills, ill health and fuel poverty.

Part 4 – Standards for social housing

We support the proposals to ensure that there is a "quality of accommodation" standard for all local housing authorities in order to achieve minimum standards across the sector, whether the house is owned by a local authority or a housing association.

We agree with the Explanatory Memorandum (3.63) that "*Tenants should be able to expect an acceptable standard of accommodation regardless of whether they are a tenant of a local authority or housing association.*"

As the wording of the bill only states that Welsh Ministers "*may set standards.*" (section 94(1)) we would seek reassurances that the intention of the Explanatory Memorandum is fully met and that the mandatory standard is put in place as soon as possible.