



# WARM RENTS CASE STUDY

Warm homes, lower costs: The case for rethinking rent

## Overview

Switchee partnered with Healthy Homes Hub, Huggg, Yorkshire Housing, Places for People (PFP), and Clarion Housing to run a bold new study tackling fuel poverty, damp, and disrepair head-on. Through the Warm Rents programme, residents received £500 in energy vouchers to help maintain a healthy indoor temperature over the 2024/25 winter.

The outcome? Marked improvements in home conditions, resident wellbeing, and compelling evidence for a smarter, fairer rent model.

## The challenge

Fuel poverty and underheating remain major drivers of damp, mould, and poor health in UK social housing.

Last winter, Switchee's Housing Fuel Poverty Index revealed that 7.4% of social homes were in fuel poverty. Among these, the risks compound: residents unable to afford adequate heating are far more likely to experience damp and mould.



# 1 in 2

households in fuel poverty also face  
high-risk, mould inducing conditions

This compares to 1 in 7 in the average social home

Switchee data from over 30,000 social homes

## The approach

Switchee's Warm Rents study set out to prove that incorporating warmth into rent could improve outcomes for residents, while also reducing NHS costs and housing repairs.

49 households across Clarion, PFP, and Yorkshire Housing enrolled directly via their Switchee devices. Each received direct-to-device energy vouchers to support heating their homes to a recommended minimum of 18°C during the day and 16°C at night.

Switchee's smart thermostat enabled the full programme: measuring indoor temperature, heating usage patterns, and mould risk, while also managing voucher delivery and keeping residents informed with real-time messaging.

Throughout the winter, Switchee tracked changes across a range of indicators to understand the real-world impact of Warm Rents.

## The approach



**16.5°C → 17.6°C**

### Average temperatures

Shift from cold to healthy temperatures



**+26 minutes**

### Heating use

Improved comfort and thermal stability  
(See graphs below).



**61.5% → 55.3%**

### Humidity

Relative humidity dropped by more than 6% on average after voucher redemption

This drop in relative humidity is critical. Without any changes to property fabric, participating homes moved below the 60% threshold associated with mould growth. As Dorset Council notes: "Homes with a relative humidity level regularly above 60% are at a higher risk of condensation and mould problems."

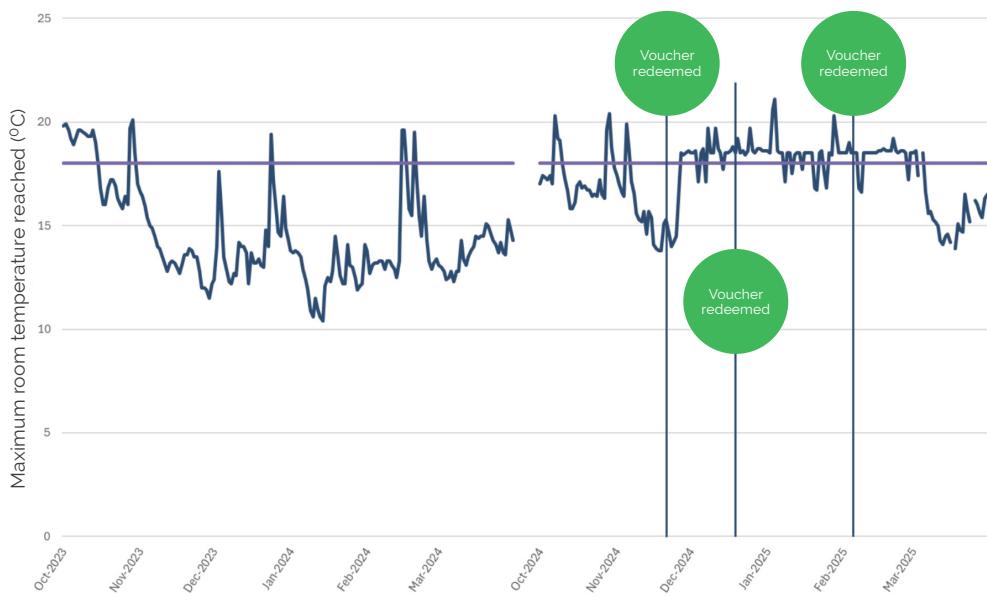
## Real stories, real impact

Two households in the study show just how transformative this approach can be:



### Places for People property example:

In the previous winter, this home had an average room temp 13.59°C. After voucher support began, temperatures rose and stabilised quickly, bringing the home into a healthy range and keeping it there.



### Clarion Housing property

#### example:

This household experienced severe underheating, with average temperatures as low as 13.07°C during the winter of 2023/24. Once the energy vouchers were received, temperatures improved noticeably. However, once the voucher support ended, temperatures dropped again, highlighting that long-term change to rents is needed to secure sustained warmth for this home.

## Resident feedback

Resident feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. While some vulnerable residents were initially anxious about unexpected costs or changes, clear communication and reassurance helped build trust and confidence.

"I've worked all my life, and still ended up sitting in a house flat wearing three jumpers. This programme was the first time someone actually saw the problem and did something about it. No inspections. No judgment. Just support. That means so much."

**Clarion resident**

"I moved in just before winter and didn't know how I'd afford to keep the place warm. Then I got the voucher offer on my Switchee and it felt like someone out there cared. Not just about bills, but about how we're living. It gave me hope that things might actually get better."

**PPF resident**

## What next? Make Warm Rents a reality for winter 2025/26

With powerful evidence from just 49 homes, the next step is clear: scale Warm Rents to reach more households across the UK. Switchee is actively working with social housing providers and policymakers to embed this model into future rent strategies. We're now looking for the right partners to grow this project and extend its impact ahead of winter 2025/26.

## Thanking our project partners



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