

Indoor air quality in Irish homes raised as key concern at Irish Green Building Council's Conference

8TH NOVEMBER 2018 BY [ADMIN \(HTTPS://WWW.IGBC.IE/AUTHOR/IGBC_USER/\)](https://www.igbc.ie/author/igbc_user/)

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Thursday, 8th November: Indoor air pollution was extensively discussed today (8.11) at the Irish Green Building Council's conference. It represents a major health risk factor for Ireland's new home building programme.



<https://www.igbc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/IndoorAirQuality6.jpg>

Irish people spend 90% of their time indoors. Poor ventilation can have significant implications on health. As new homes become more insulated and airtight greater focus is needed on the management of ventilation.

Opening the conference Minister Damien English T.D. said: "Half a million new homes must be built by 2040. With the nearly Zero Energy Building (nZEB) standard coming into force next year, these homes will be extremely energy efficient. But we must also ensure they are healthy, and part of healthy, vibrant communities".

Reacting to these comments, Pat Barry, CEO of the Irish Green Building Council said: “We are committed to enabling home buyers to make more informed choices. Our Home Performance Index certification scheme provides a single label for quality and sustainability. It indicates to home buyers that a house has been built to consider impacts on health and is climate change resilient”.

Dr Gráinne McGill of the Glasgow based MEARU research unit added: “Poor indoor air quality in housing can be increasingly traced to poor ventilation. As our homes become more airtight, less dependence can be placed on natural infiltration. Adequate ventilation systems are now critical”.

The conference also heard about key risks for Irish homes brought by climate change, including flooding and overheating.

As the world gets warmer and extreme events increase, climate change must be factored into the design of new homes. Dr Ina Kelly, a public health consultant with the HSE said: “To minimise the health impacts of climate change, every home must be planned, designed and built to be sustainable. The particular vulnerability of the very young, the sick and the very old must be fully taken into account”.

Matthew Barker of BRE added: “The construction industry needs to be pro-active in its response to climate change. Simple design changes can reduce climate related risks such as flooding. Resilience must be considered before an event not as a response to it”.

Better Homes (<https://www.igbc.ie/events/better-homes-2018/>) is the Irish Green Building Council’s annual residential buildings conference. It was kindly sponsored by Ecocem (https://www.igbc.ie/members_profiles/ecocem/), and ESB (https://www.igbc.ie/members_profiles/electric-ireland/).

IGBC’s members (<https://www.igbc.ie/membership/members/>) can download all the presentations here (<https://www.igbc.ie/resources/better-homes-2018-presentations/>).

Minister Damien English T.D. full speech can be read here (<http://rebuildingireland.ie/news/minister-englishs-speech-at-irish-green-building-council-better-homes/>).



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