



Scottish Budget: Existing Homes Alliance Scotland welcomes new funding for energy efficiency to tackle fuel poverty and climate change

The Existing Homes Alliance Scotland [1] has welcomed Deputy First Minister John Swinney's announcement that an additional £20m is to be put towards energy efficiency as part of the Scottish Budget [2]. Alan Ferguson, Chair of the Existing Homes Alliance Scotland said:

"We are pleased to see additional funding put towards energy efficiency. This investment is very welcome indeed given the recent Scottish Government figures which show fuel poverty is on the rise – up to a startling 39% of Scottish households (940,000). [3] Scotland has a target to eradicate fuel poverty by 2016, and every effort should be made to turn round the current backwards trend and eliminate this unnecessary burden on the Scottish people."

Energy efficiency has a very important influence in eradicating and reducing the risk of fuel poverty in the future by creating homes that are warm, affordable to heat, and low carbon. This investment will save money for ordinary households struggling to pay their bills, but also for the NHS, by reducing the health impacts associated with cold and damp homes. Furthermore, this extra funding will help create and maintain jobs in the insulation industry, giving them more certainty and stability to plan their investments.

The additional funding will go part way towards plugging the gap left by reductions to the UK Government's Energy Company Obligation funding, which the Scottish Government predicted would mean a fall in energy efficiency investment for Scotland by £50m per year. [4] However, we firmly believe still more needs to be done to compensate for these losses, and we look forward to working with the Scottish Government to step up the pace and scale of change to the energy performance of Scotland's homes in the coming year. This would include making energy efficiency a major national infrastructure priority to achieve the vision of warm and cosy homes that everyone can afford to enjoy.

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Notes to Editors

[1] Existing Homes Alliance Scotland is a coalition of housing, anti-poverty and environmental organisations campaigning for making Scotland's homes fit for the 21st century. It includes the following members: Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers, Changeworks, Chartered Institute of Housing, Citizen's Advice Scotland, Energy Action Scotland, Energy Agency, Energy Saving Trust, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, and WWF Scotland.

[2] Scottish Government press release

<http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Health-and-Education-at-heart-of-budget-159b.aspx>

[3] Scottish House Condition Survey Key Findings 2013

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/12/6903/1>

[4] Minister for Housing Margaret Burgess statement

<http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Fuel-poor-households-to-suffer-ba5.aspx>