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## Priority for 'Warm Homes' lights up Scottish Programme for Government

- Ambition unveiled for Scotland's new efficiency programme for investment of £10bn to rid Scotland of the scourge of 'cold' homes and tackle climate change.
- Spending on energy efficiency to receive welcome Brexit boost and multi-year investment, but much more will be needed long-term to realise ambitions.
- Consultation on regulations a welcome move to drive uptake and ensure everyone can enjoy the benefits of a warm, low carbon and affordable to heat home.

The Programme for Government [1] contains welcome detail on the new 'Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme' which will deliver the Scottish Government's commitment to a National Infrastructure Priority on energy efficiency to tackle fuel poverty and climate change.

The Programme for Government unveils the scale of the programme to require £10 billion over the course of the programme. An additional £20m of Brexit stimulus funds will be spent on energy efficiency programmes, bringing overall spending on energy efficiency to £500m over the next four years and providing a boost to local economies and communities. Although this multi-year commitment is positive, this represents a small increase on current funding and will fall far short of realising projected £10bn investment required.

A further welcome announcement is the intention to consult on regulations to drive uptake of energy efficiency in private rented housing, as well as phased regulation of existing buildings. Encouraging everyone to invest in their homes will be crucial to achieving the overall investment needed to tackle fuel poverty and reduce climate emissions.

The Existing Homes Alliance [2] has estimated that a total of £4.5bn of public investment will be required to virtually eliminate energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty and meet climate targets [3]. We believe the Scottish Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP) should aim

for the vast majority of homes to reach at least an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band C by 2025 . This would benefit 1.5million households, help reduce energy bills, cut the nation’s carbon emissions, reduce NHS costs of treating illnesses related to cold and damp homes, and create up to 9,000 new jobs spread across Scotland. This objective is also supported by more than 50 major civil society organisations [4].

Alan Ferguson, chair of the Existing Homes Alliance said:

“It’s great news the government has decided to make tackling fuel poverty and driving up the energy performance of our homes a priority in the Programme for Government. People in Scotland shouldn’t be suffering from fuel poverty because it’s too expensive to keep their home warm.

“We agree the overall cost of the programme will be £10bn to virtually eliminate energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty and meet our climate targets. This means two things – we’ll need more investment from the public sector, as well as fair and reasonable regulation of the whole private sector housing stock – providing those in private housing the benefits of a warm and affordable to heat home that social housing tenants have enjoyed for years – thanks to regulation.

“This is not just about fuel poverty and climate change - a multi-billion pound investment in energy efficiency can delivery excellent value for money as a stimulus project – research estimates it will have a benefit to cost ratio of 2:1 – with direct impacts on people’s well-being, employment and energy costs throughout Scotland.” [5]

“The Alliance looks forward to working with government and opposition parties on a shared ambition for all Scots to enjoy the benefits of living in a warm, dry home.”

Ends

**Notes to Editors**

[1] The Scottish Government published its new Programme for Government on today.

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00505210.pdf>

[2] The Existing Homes Alliance Scotland is a coalition of housing, environmental, fuel poverty and industry organisations calling for urgent action to transform Scotland's existing housing stock and make it fit for the 21st century. More

information: <http://existinghomesalliancescotland.co.uk>

[3] Existing Homes Alliance policy briefing on the rationale for a National Infrastructure Priority on energy efficiency. <http://existinghomesalliancescotland.co.uk/policy/existing-homes-alliance-calls-for-energy-efficiency-to-be-national-infrastructure-project-in-2016-out-policy-asks-for-2016/>

[4] Joint statement of organisations - 'No one in Scotland should be living in a hard-to-heat, draughty home by 2025'. [http://existinghomesalliancescotland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/EXHAS\\_jointstatement\\_Oct15.pdf](http://existinghomesalliancescotland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/EXHAS_jointstatement_Oct15.pdf)

[5] Research by Frontier has estimated a benefit to cost ratio of 2:1 for investment in energy efficiency.

<http://www.frontier-economics.com/documents/2015/09/energy-efficiency-infrastructure-priority.pdf>

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