



A Warm Homes Bill affordable to heat, low carbon homes for all

Joint Statement of Organisations, May 2018

Affordable to heat, low carbon homes for all

We the undersigned call for a Warm Homes Bill that delivers affordable to heat, low carbon homes for everyone in Scotland. This Bill is a once in a generation opportunity to transform Scotland's homes, put an end to fuel poverty and seize the opportunities of a low carbon future.

The Scottish Government proposes to introduce a Warm Homes Bill focused on setting a new fuel poverty target and adopting a new definition. This scope is too narrow and risks missing the opportunities to end fuel poverty, create new jobs and investment and to tackle climate change.

The Warm Homes Bill should:

- Provide the legal foundation for a new fuel poverty target and strategy, and for Energy Efficient Scotland.
- Include long term targets for energy performance with clear timescales, giving industry, homeowners and landlords the certainty to invest.
- Remove barriers to and create incentives for installing energy efficiency and low carbon heat and realising their full potential.
- Set robust quality standards and consumer protection measures.
- Ensure that everyone can benefit from affordable heat and energy use in all parts of Scotland regardless of geography, tenancy, housing type and income.

Benefits

More energy efficient homes mean lower energy bills and reduced climate change emissions. This means people are less likely to suffer ill health, stress and poor attainment due to a cold and damp home. It also means greater energy security for Scotland with less reliance on volatile fuel prices and reduced energy supply infrastructure costs.¹

The potential

In Scotland, and indeed the UK, there is a huge energy saving potential: a recent study found cost-effective improvements in home energy efficiency and low carbon heating could reduce energy demand by 25% over the next 20 years – equivalent to the annual output of six nuclear power stations the size of Hinkley Point C.²

The imperative

More than a quarter of Scottish households are still living in fuel poverty – the same proportion who faced cold homes a decade ago – and over a million homes fall below the energy efficiency standard needed for our health. All political parties agree this is unacceptable in a modern, wealthy country. The Warm Homes Bill is the opportunity for change.

With a new Climate Change Bill expected to set even more challenging targets to meet the requirements of the Paris Climate Agreement, it is even more important for our homes to be made highly energy efficient and either powered by low carbon heat or made 'low carbon ready'.

Change is not coming fast enough – for the people living in cold, damp homes and to meet climate change targets. This Bill is the chance we need to pick up the pace and transform Scotland for the better.

Warm Homes Bill measures

We believe that the Bill should include the following measures to create a stable long-term policy environment, with clear targets and credible policies for delivering them:

Fuel poverty

- Renewed definition and target to eradicate fuel poverty.
- Target to remove poor energy performance as a driver of fuel poverty.
- Actions and milestones relating to all four drivers of fuel poverty.
- Provisions for accountability, scrutiny, monitoring, reporting and reviewing of the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Energy performance of existing housing stock

- A statutory framework for *Energy Efficient Scotland*³ including targets and scrutiny provisions.
- Establishment of an independent body responsible for oversight of Energy Efficient Scotland.
- A duty on local authorities to produce Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies.
- Review of existing legislation on potential for tax incentives for energy efficient properties and a broadening of financial and fiscal incentives.

Regulation

- Set out a timeframe for review of barriers to energy performance improvements in common works in tenements and flats (including consideration of EPCs).
- Set out a timeframe for review of building regulations with a remit to include existing and new buildings.
- Require a review of relevant regulatory frameworks (eg planning) to ensure they support and facilitate achievement of fuel poverty strategy and Energy Efficient Scotland targets.

Conclusion

Investment in the quality of our housing stock underpins progress across so many government policy objectives – tackling fuel poverty and climate change, reducing ill-health and improving well-being, reducing inequalities, and creating and sustaining jobs across Scotland. The Warm Homes Bill represents a rare opportunity to provide a strong legislative foundation for the new Fuel Poverty Strategy and Energy Efficient Scotland to ensure Scotland meets both its fuel poverty and climate change goals. We urge the Scottish Government and politicians of all parties to seize this opportunity.

1. UK CCC 2017 Energy Prices and Bills – impact of meeting carbon budgets

2. UKERC (2017) *Unlocking Britain's First Fuel*, <http://www.ukerc.ac.uk/news/unlocking-britains-first-fuel.html>

3. Energy Efficient Scotland will include improving energy efficiency and decarbonising heat in domestic and non-domestic buildings. This statement focuses on domestic buildings, though the legislative measures would benefit from application across both the domestic and non-domestic sectors.

This statement is supported by:

AC Whyte	Church of Scotland	National Union of Students	Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
Age Scotland	Citizens Advice Scotland	One Parent Families Scotland	SERS
Association for the Conservation of Energy	E3G	Poverty Alliance	Share
Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers	Energy Action Scotland	Public Health Programme, NHS Ayrshire and Arran	Shelter Scotland
BCA Group	Energy Agency	Royal College of General Practitioners	Stop Climate Chaos Scotland
BRE	Energy Saving Trust	Royal College of Nursing Scotland	STUC
British Lung Foundation Scotland	Energystore	Saint-Gobain	Sunamp
Built Environment Forum Scotland	Federation of Master Builders	Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation	Superglass
Changeworks	Friends of the Earth Scotland	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations	UK Green Building Council
Chartered Institute of Housing	Institution of Civil Engineers	Scottish Directors of Public Health	Unison Scotland
Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland	John Gilbert Architects		Unite
	John Muir Trust		University and Colleges Union (UCU)
	Living Rent		WWF Scotland
	MIMA		
	MP Rendering		
	National Insulation Association		



For further information, contact:

Elizabeth Leighton, Director, Existing Homes Alliance Scotland

elizabeth@leightonconsulting.co.uk

www.existinghomesalliancescotland.co.uk

Front page photo © Julia Marsh, Hand Knitted Things
handknittedthings.blogspot.co.uk

Leaflet design by LynxGraphicDesign.co.uk