

Media Release – for immediate use – 6 February 2020

Existing Homes Alliance Scotland says funding increase falls well short in delivering climate friendly homes

The Scottish Budget, published today [1] includes a total of £137m dedicated to energy efficiency measures such as the provision of insulation, new heating systems and advice and information for renters and homeowners. This figure has increased only slightly from last year's budget of £119 million – even though making our homes warm and cosy is one of the best investments we can make to tackle the climate crisis.

The Existing Homes Alliance [2] is calling for a doubling of investment from 2019/20 – to £240m - for warm, affordable to heat and low carbon homes – to meet Scotland's ambitious climate and fuel poverty targets [3].

Last year the Scottish Government passed new statutory targets to reduce fuel poverty as far as possible by 2040 and to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2045. As of 2019, 25 percent of households were still living in fuel poverty and housing accounted for 15 percent of direct climate warming emissions. For these targets to be met, the energy efficiency of homes across Scotland must be dramatically improved in the next 10 years.

Lori McElroy, Chair of the Existing Homes Alliance said:

“While we welcome the increase in funding for energy efficiency and fuel poverty, the allocation is still over £100 million less than the £240 million needed to bring housing emissions into line with our climate ambitions.”

“Investing in the energy efficiency of our homes will have far reaching benefits beyond reducing fuel poverty and carbon emissions. It will improve health and wellbeing, saving money for the NHS, create jobs across Scotland and ensure that our homes are fit for a zero-carbon future.

“Failure to invest properly in energy efficiency will drive up the cost of heat decarbonisation, and risk undermining efforts to alleviate fuel poverty.”

“At the current level of improvement - just 2% per annum according to the most recent Scottish House Condition Survey - it will take 25 years for the vast majority of our homes to reach a standard of EPC band C, when they should be striving for zero carbon by that date.

The Alliance has set out how a doubling of the energy efficiency and fuel poverty budgets would deliver the necessary pace of change that is proportionate to tackling the climate emergency. There are no technological, legal or structural barriers to scaling up. Today's small increase in the energy efficiency and fuel poverty budget is welcome but it misses a critical opportunity to capitalise on existing programmes to reduce fuel poverty and respond to the climate emergency before it is too late.”

Ends

Notes

[1] Scottish Budget <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-budget-2020-21/>

[2] The [Existing Homes Alliance](#) is a coalition of 10 founding member organisations and supporters representing housing, environment, anti-pov3erty and consumer groups arguing for greater investment in Scotland's existing housing stock to make it fit for the 21st century.

[3] Existing Homes Alliance Budget [Briefing](#)

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