

Media Release – for immediate use – 1 December 2020

Existing Homes Alliance Scotland calls for doubling of funding as latest statistics show a quarter of households still living in fuel poverty

The number of households living in fuel poverty remains unacceptably high, and the numbers living in extreme fuel poverty is of great concern, particularly given the economic impacts of the pandemic which will only worsen this situation as we go into winter, according to the Existing Homes Alliance Scotland [1].

The latest Scottish House Condition Survey data [2] shows that 613,000 households (24.6%) were living in fuel poverty in 2019, compared with 619,000 (25%) in 2018. Within these figures, there are 311,000 households (12.4%) in extreme fuel poverty, compared with 279,000 (11.3%) in the same period.

Lori McElroy, Chair of the Existing Homes Alliance said, “The publication of these figures from 2019 gives us the opportunity to reflect on what more we can be doing to tackle fuel poverty. Over the longer-term fuel poverty is dropping and cold and draughty homes are being improved, which is good news, and is testament to the excellent work of the Scottish Government, Home Energy Scotland and the many partners involved in delivering fuel poverty services.”

“But the fact that extreme fuel poverty is not reducing is concerning. We also need to remember that COVID-19 is likely to increase fuel poverty further - Scottish Government research [3] has identified that, as more people work from home and with increased unemployment, an additional 136,000 (5%) of Scotland’s households are at risk of being pushed into fuel poverty.”

Lori McElroy added “While fuel poverty programmes are making a difference we’re not doing enough and we’re not doing it quickly enough. We urge the Scottish Government to double the funding for Scotland’s fuel poverty programmes in the 2021/22 budget as part of a £244 million package to lift people out of fuel poverty and support a green recovery – improving health, creating jobs, reducing emissions and making fuel poverty a thing of the past.”

Ends

Notes

[1] [Scottish House Condition Survey: 2019 Key Findings](#), Scottish Government, December 2020

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

[3] [Experimental analysis of the impact of COVID19 on Fuel Poverty Rates](#), Scottish Government, September 2020

[4] Existing Homes Alliance [Manifesto](#)

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