

Sent: 02 September 2012 22:04
To: Sustainable Housing Strategy Consultation 2012
Subject: Homes that don't cost the earth – consultation response

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Blue

Scottish Government
Housing Sustainability and Innovative Finance Area 1-J South Victoria Quay Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing in response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Scotland's Sustainable Housing Strategy.

An increasing number of families are struggling to even provide the essentials, and with the approach of winter many will have to choose between food or heat. Many still have to live in damp, poor housing. Many still have the highly inefficient and expensive white meter electric storage heaters, which should be banned. Smart meters will not be compulsory for several years, so it is also time to stop penalising those, many on low income, who use prepayment meters.

I welcome the Strategy's vision for "warm, high quality, affordable, low carbon homes." Homes are responsible for a quarter of Scotland's carbon emissions and a third of its energy use. At the same time, fuel poverty is increasing – the government estimates over 800,000 households (35%) were fuel poor in 2011. It is critical that this strategy includes the right policies and resources to ensure we meet our climate change targets and eradicate fuel poverty.

In particular, I want to support:

1. A National Retrofit Programme

This should be the over-arching programme designed to meet a 42% reduction in emissions from the housing sector by 2020 and eradicate fuel poverty by 2016. New milestones need to be set to match this ambition.

2. Minimum energy efficiency standards for all private housing

Alongside attractive financial incentives, a basic standard of E on the Energy Performance Certificate scale should be introduced by 2015 at the point of sale or rental. There is no reason why substandard properties which condemn people to high bills and fuel poverty should continue to be on the market. Regulation will drive demand for energy upgrades, and give a meaningful value to the energy performance of homes. Voluntary programmes are not delivering the pace and scale of change required.

3. Net-Zero carbon standards for new build by 2016

The government must reaffirm its commitment to establish net-zero carbon standards (homes that use zero carbon over the course of a year) for new homes by 2016. It is possible to build these homes now at little extra cost. Why settle for less?

We need to give homes a more prominent place in meeting our climate change targets – and at the same time win gains for green jobs, and the fuel poor. Getting the strategy right, with the right balance of carrots and sticks is essential.

I am replying as an individual and am happy for my response and name to be published on the Scottish Government website, but not my address.

I understand that my name and address are required to identify me as an individual, so that my response can be included in the consultation analysis.

I am content for the Scottish Government to contact me again in relation to this consultation exercise.

Yours faithfully

Frances Sinclair