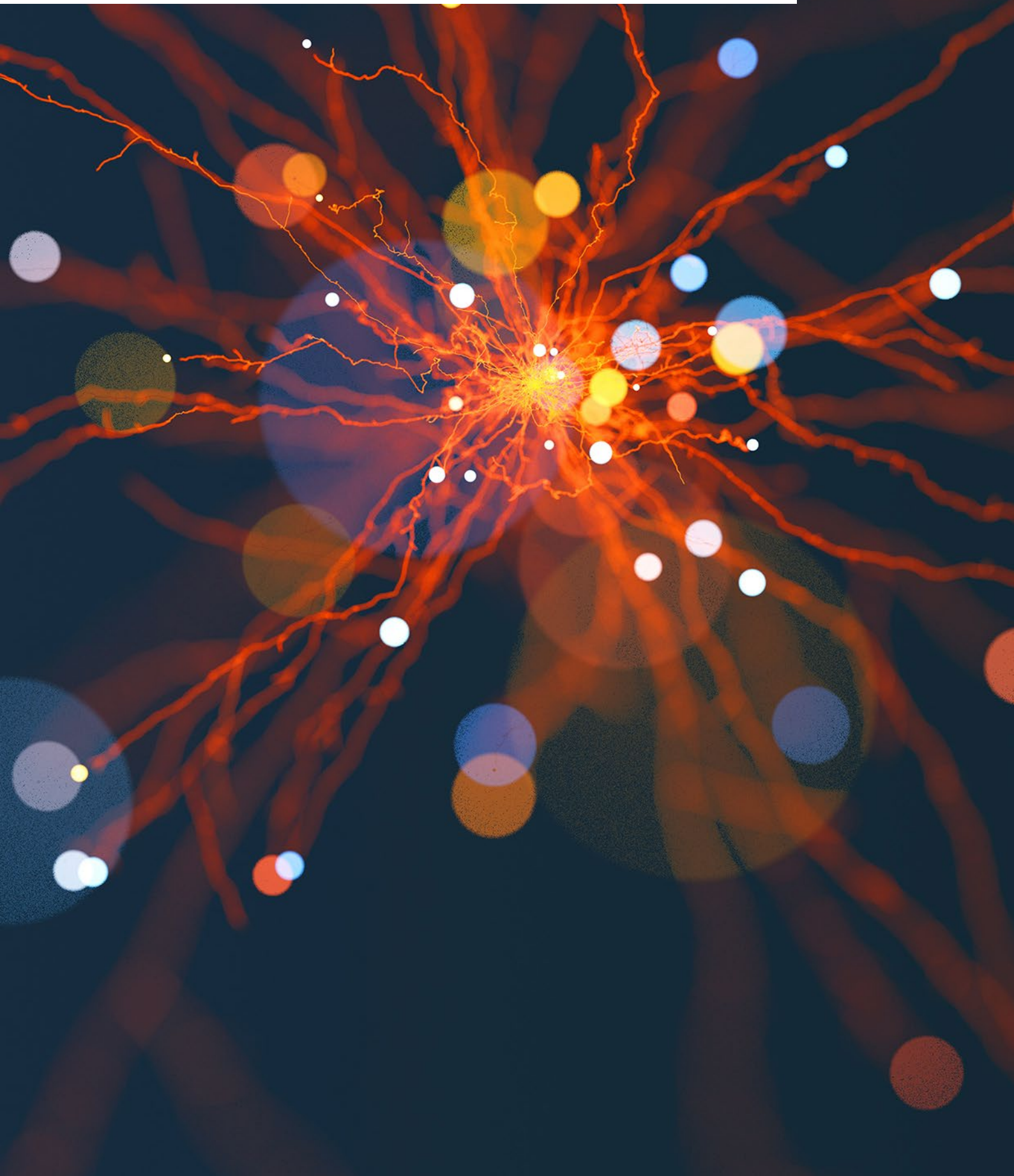




Annual Review

for a future without fuel poverty

2020-2021



MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Several of Energy Action Scotland's familiar faces moved on during the last year or so. They strived to make a difference for people enduring fuel poverty and they really did, whether through practical projects such as building the capacity of the advice sector, advancing our understanding of fuel poverty or representing the views of our members. **Scott, Barbara, Helen, RoseAnn and Carol** have all moved on and I really do wish them all the success with their new focus.

Throughout 2020/21 we made use of the provisions of pandemic support where we could. This was exclusively the furlough scheme which was an important support for us.

We did not return to our office in Ingram Street during the last year as COVID 19 restrictions and our own health and safety responsibilities dictated, making it a year devoid of in-person contact. It was hard on everyone but people performed brilliantly throughout. At the same time there is a lot to learn from working remotely and delivering activity virtually as there is for so many of our members.

Our AGM last year took place online with a guest speaker David Orr, Associate Director for Homes at the Centre for Ageing Better presenting. It was a departure from what can be a mundane and procedural moment for many organisations.

Our Annual Conference also moved online with six sessions held over three days in March. We were joined by 904 people from 135 organisations which was an amazing experience and quite the learning curve for our team. More than 20 presenters provided an excellent range of fuel poverty related input just ahead of the Scottish Parliament May election. We delivered our Fuel Poverty Heroes award to four inspiring people:

At the end of the year 2020/21 we published our manifesto to end fuel poverty which enjoyed a great deal of cross-party interest and support.

Bruce McCall (Greener Kirkaldy); Derek Smith (Kingdom Housing Association); Euan Hird (Hillcrest Housing Association); and Martha MacLeod (Tighean Innse Gall).

We believe that there is no substitute for face-to-face events; however it has been inspiring to appreciate just how many more people can engage when barriers such as cost and time are largely removed. It is certainly something we will continue use in future to allow for those who live remotely as well as others unable to join us in person going forward.

We will also begin to reintroduce face to face meetings with our members and supporters. There is no substitute for the kinds of conversations we that only those more personal interactions afford.

At the end of the year 2020/21 we published our manifesto to end fuel poverty which enjoyed a great deal of cross-party interest and support. We are hopeful that we will see that support reflected in policy development as the Scottish Parliamentary term progresses.

The strength that Energy Action Scotland has an advocate and champion for change is as a result of the diversity and experiences of our members. We recognise that there are many individuals and smaller organisations who share our passion for addressing inequalities and in response to their engagement, we introduced a new supporter tier of membership which is free. We will continue to promote this membership to broaden the movement, bringing new insights and experiences to share with you all.

We also stood up for the excellent advisory services in Glasgow provided by the Citizen's Advice Bureaux in the city. It was disappointing to see how these services were targeted for cuts at a time of greatest vulnerability for those most in need. We joined a broad coalition with partners from across civil society which fortunately ensured that services continued.

In October 2020, during Challenge Poverty Week, we launched our first ever Winter Campaign Crowdfunder. With generous sponsorship from Warmworks and AC Whyte we secured the support of Masterchef: The Professionals champion, Gary Maclean. Gary created online videos to help people make basic recipes in programmable pressure cookers. We negotiated an excellent discount from Instant Brand, the makers of the Pot Duo cooker and over 400 families were supported through partners, Almond Housing Association, Kingdom Housing, The Home Group, Ruchazie Housing Association and Paisley Housing Association. Generous donations came from the public

and feedback has been incredibly positive as the cookers stimulated some creativity and competition amongst households. Importantly they helped people provide warm nutritious food using less energy.

Providing support to vulnerable households that might otherwise struggle with existing services has always been an important learning opportunity for Energy Action Scotland. It is an area where we believe we add real value to the lives of people experiencing fuel poverty and that this is additional to the work of our members. Warm Home Discount funded industry initiatives



funded by Scottish Power and SSE/OVO meant that we could deliver targeted and vital support to people with a cancer diagnosis. In collaboration with MacMillan Cancer Support and CLAN we helped hundreds of people access efficient white goods and heating upgrades to support their health and wellbeing at an incredibly difficult time.

During 2020/21 we also delivered funding from the William Grant Foundation through a Fuel Poverty Challenge Fund to 15 organisations. Each organisation designed and delivered support tailored to local communities and circumstances. Whilst it concluded during Q1 of 2021/22, it was set to benefit over 2000 households with new collaborations, in areas undeserved with access to fuel vouchers, with The Fuel Bank Foundation.

Building capacity across the energy advice sector remains an incredibly important aspect of our work. We deliver this in two ways, through introductory training for frontline workers which helps them to more quickly signpost households to the right support and through more formal training to attain recognised qualifications. Over 350 people attended and gained CPD certifications for our introductory level. Working with National Energy Action over 60 people progressed through City and Guilds Energy Awareness training.

2020/21 was an incredibly busy period of policy and regulatory development in domestic energy provision and housing. In Scotland we provided comprehensive responses to the Heat Networks Bill, now an act, that ensured, with the support of SFHA and Citizens Advice Scotland, that fuel poverty was a primary consideration of new developments. We responded to at least one consultation with fuel poverty impacts every month contributing to 14 consultations including Warm Home Discount extensions, RIO II, and the default tariff cap.

Finally, we represented the views of our members across a range of stakeholder groups including Energy Associations Gas goes Green, Stakeholder reference work with SP Energy Networks, the consumer engagement group for SSEN, health and social care networks in Scotland, Scottish Government Energy Consumers Commission, Consumer Network for Scotland, the Scottish Winter Benefits stakeholder group and the third sector and charities group with Ofgem.

I am immensely proud of the dedication and professionalism of our small team. It was a challenging year with so many changes and so many adaptations. Everyone contributed to the successful delivery of our work.

Frazer Scott,
Chief Executive Officer

FINANCIAL FOCUS: April 2020 - March 2021

Sources of Income	£	%
Private Sector	833,350	82
Self-Generated	51,014	5
Public Sector	130,000	13
Total	1,014,364	100

Resources Expended	£	%
Policy Briefing and Fundraising	837,606	79
Training and Consultancy	214,952	20
Governance and Administration	7,694	1
Total	1,060,252	100





It is clear though, that for many, the pandemic and pressure to spend as much time as possible at home, aggravated the effects of fuel poverty.

We now see the double whammy of the end of the 20% uplift in Universal Credit and huge hikes in energy prices. Also, with COP 26 we see the well respected pressure to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. The question remains, how do we reconcile the need to battle climate change at the same time as eliminating fuel poverty? The secret is energy efficiency, but that doesn't come cheap. The changes that are needed to make many homes energy efficient are expensive to install and expensive to run.

The Scottish Government has published their Fuel Poverty Strategy, but what we need going forward is a coalition of Government in Edinburgh, Government in Westminster, local councils, energy companies, house builders and all who care about the most vulnerable, coming together not just to talk about a way forward but to do the groundwork of putting serious plans into action.

We have a beautiful country, but it can be very cold and very wet.

I am very proud of the leadership given by Energy Action Scotland to grasp what is needed, and to be practical in seeking ways forward. In these tougher times, all of us who care must come together behind their leadership so that no one, young or old, must live in the misery of being cold and not being able to cook a hot meal. It is a shame on our society.

The Rt Hon Baroness Liddell Of Coatdyke
– President



Last year we were all coping with the effects of coronavirus and now there is some light on the horizon as vaccination and booster jags should allow us to have family get togethers again at Christmas.



While we were unable to meet in person, it was very encouraging to see so many people join the EAS Annual Conference which took place online for the first time ever. Online participation has removed many of the financial and geographic barriers which made it hard for many of our members to join us in person and this is something we are pleased to have been able to improve.

This year was our first with Frazer Scott as our CEO and it has been a very positive period with a new perspective and vision to reinvigorate our work.

As always, we are grateful to our partners and members for their continued financial and professional support. EAS continues to meet the strategic targets set by the Board giving us ongoing confidence that EAS is working effectively to meet our common aim to ensure that Scotland reaches its target of reducing fuel poverty levels to 5% by 2040.

Liz Marquis
– Convener

On behalf of the EAS Board, I am pleased to report that the organisation has performed well during 2020-21.

It was a challenging year with the continuing pandemic restrictions and the loss of several members of staff to whom we send our thanks for their valued service over a number of years.

