

Scotland's Fuel Poverty Charity Welcomes New Routemap to an Energy Efficient Scotland

NEWS RELEASE

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Scotland's national fuel poverty charity, Energy Action Scotland welcomes today's launch of a new Routemap to an Energy Efficient Scotland by First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon.

While attending the All Energy Conference in Glasgow, the First Minister spoke of her commitment to tackle fuel poverty and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, outlining action to ensure that by 2040, all homes are more fuel efficient.

Energy Action Scotland are pleased to see that fuel poverty is a priority for Scottish Government and look forward to working with Ministers and officials to ensure that goals are achieved in advance of 2040.

Energy Action Scotland Director, Norman Kerr said

"We are pleased to see Scottish Government set out its plans to eradicate fuel poverty while making Scotland's homes more energy efficient.

"649 000 households in Scotland are currently living in fuel poverty which is an unacceptably high number of people making a daily choice between heating and eating.

"Fuel poverty is a massive burden to our NHS, leading to delayed discharge and increasing the number of older people attending their GP by 19% for every degree the temperature drops below 5 degrees centigrade. This is unaffordable and unacceptable.

"35% of rural households live in fuel poverty. Across the rest of the country that figure is 31%. These are households unable to afford adequate heat for basic health, unable to afford adequate heat to keep their homes dry, unable to afford adequate heat to cook or refrigerate food, or provide hot water for washing.

“We have an opportunity to save lives, to improve lives for households, young and old alike and we must take it.

“We look forward continuing working in partnership with Scottish Government and engaging with all partners in order to ensure we achieve an end to fuel poverty in Scotland before the target date of 2040.”

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. Energy Action Scotland is the national organisation working with Government and energy companies to end fuel poverty and create warm, dry homes for all in Scotland. www.eas.org.uk
2. Fuel poverty is the inability to afford adequate warmth in the home, currently defined as needing to pay more than 10 per cent of income on energy costs.
3. The main causes of fuel poverty are poor energy efficiency of the home, high domestic fuel prices and low household income.
4. EAS campaigns for policy to acknowledge the particular difficulties faced by the fuel poor in rural areas. Higher fuel costs, lack of access to the mains gas grid, premiums on energy, a challenging housing stock and difficulty getting companies delivering energy efficiency measures to operate in some areas are a few of the difficulties faced. Consumers in rural areas off the gas grid can pay significantly more for the same fuel sold in urban areas. EAS believes that the reason behind this discrepancy in price can be attributed, in some part, to the lack of regulation of most rural heating fuels. Regulation is therefore needed on domestic fuels such as heating oils, solid fuels, and LPG.
5. The official Scottish Government figures show that in 2016 there were 649,000 households in Scotland in fuel poverty i.e. 26.5%. Source: Scottish House Condition Survey 2016: Key Findings published by the Scottish Government on 5 December 2017 and accessed [here](#).
6. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 had placed a statutory duty on the Scottish Government to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that people were not living in fuel poverty in Scotland by November 2016. This target was not met. Two advisory groups published their recommendations to the Scottish Government on how to take forward their plans to eradicate fuel poverty in Scotland. The reports can be found [here](#) for the Scottish Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group and [here](#) for the Scottish Rural Fuel Poverty Task Force.

7. The Ofgem report entitled 'Vulnerable Consumers in the Retail Energy Market: 2017' can be found [here](#).