

Minimum Energy Performance in Domestic Buildings Campaign

– Ensuring Clean Growth

The UK has some of the least efficient buildings in Europe. It is estimated that there currently 19 million homes in the UK with an EPC rating below C, out of a total of 27 million. Today in the UK, 4 million households live in fuel poverty and in England over 1 million of these households have one or more children under 16. Some of the benefits of improving our building stock summarised below:

- **Warmer and healthier homes**
- **Lower fuel bills for households**
- **Improved health and well-being (both physical and mental)**
- **Better educational attainment**
- **Lower carbon emissions from buildings**
- **Reduced rent arrears**
- **Creation of jobs across the country**

In 2016, the Sustainable Energy Association launched a campaign to bring the whole of the existing housing stock up to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band C.

CAMPAIGN



See overleaf for more information and to find out how you can help



We were delighted to see the **Government commitment to upgrading all fuel poor homes in the Clean Growth Strategy**. The Strategy stated that *'we want all fuel poor homes to be upgraded to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030'*. For fuel poor homes, the impact of living in a home with leaky walls or inefficient heating systems can be considerable and we welcome the Government's commitment to improving the homes of the most vulnerable.

However, it is not just the homes of the fuel poor that need upgrading. Whilst these homes are most in need, the impact of leaky homes on energy bills and carbon emissions across the country is substantial. We were therefore pleased to see that the Government has set out a phased approach to improving the housing stock with an **aspiration 'for as many homes as possible to be EPC Band C by 2035 where practical, cost-effective and affordable'**.

Whilst we welcome this aspiration, we believe that it should be enshrined in law and for this reason we are promoting the [Domestic Properties \(Minimum Energy Performance\) Bill](#).

The Committee on Climate Change have stated that the Government's commitments on energy efficiency in the Clean Growth Strategy have the potential to deliver the ambition in their central scenario for meeting the fifth carbon budget. However, the full suite of required policies are not yet in place to drive the required improvements in energy performance.

Enshrining these two targets in law and requiring the Government to develop a more detailed plan of action would prevent any future government disregarding the target, would provide the certainty needed to trigger vital investment in the sector and would encourage innovation. The Bill, which has been introduced by Sir David Amess MP, has cross-party support from notable parliamentarians, including Sir Graham Brady and Sir Edward Davey.

Sir David Amess MP pioneered the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000, an Act which called on the Government not only to define the concept of fuel poverty but to recognise it as a distinct social problem. Following the introduction of the Act, good progress was made, however the phrase "as far as reasonably practicable", which was initially inserted to avoid forcing entry, was interpreted by the High Court as meaning that the Government could abandon the commitment to ending fuel poverty.

The Domestic Properties (Minimum Energy Performance) Bill has two dimensions. Firstly, it addresses the loophole by requiring the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to prepare a plan to bring all fuel-poor homes up to energy performance certificate band C by 2030 as set out in the Clean Growth Strategy. Secondly, it will address those not classified as fuel poor. We recognise that the task of addressing all properties is a more challenging one, so a staged approach has been taken with the target set in 2035 which is aligned with the Government's own ambition.

The Bill will also require the Minister to maximise new and innovative technologies and to consider how best they can be utilised to realise the Bill's aims. The introduction of such a Bill will help to provide certainty to industry, to investors and to homeowners encouraging them to invest in low carbon, energy efficient and sustainable solutions.

The Bill had its first reading on 6th February 2018 in the House of Commons. A group of MPs has now written to Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth, the Rt Hon Claire Perry MP urging her to support the Bill. The second reading is scheduled for the 15th June 2018.



GET INVOLVED

To demonstrate the need for a legal requirement on the Government, the Sustainable Energy Association is co-ordinating an industry letter to the Minister which already has many supporters. Please contact Ron Bailey (Head of Parliamentary Affairs) and Samantha Crichton (Policy Advisor) for further information and to support the letter.

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References

1. Domestic Properties (Minimum Energy Performance) Bill
2. *Presented by Sir David Amess, Peter Aldous, Richard Benyon, Sir Graham Brady, Martyn Day, Sir Edward Davey, Mary Glendon, Carolyn Harris, James Heapey, Mr Bernard Jenkin, Dame Caroline Spelman and Daniel Zeichner*
3. https://www.sustainableenergyassociation.com/resources/domestic_properties_bill/
4. Domestic Properties (Minimum Energy Performance) Bill – Progress of the Bill
5. <https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/domesticpropertiesminimumenergyperformance.html>
6. Domestic Properties (Minimum Energy Performance) Bill – Hansard report <https://goo.gl/Dyty1N>