

Correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Housing regarding the work of the Regulatory Review Group in relation to Heat in Buildings, 18 February 2026

Dear Ariane,

At the meeting of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee on 20 January I agreed to provide a summary of the work undertaken by the Regulatory Review Group (RRG) in relation to Heat in Buildings.

The RRG's purpose is to support better regulation by examining how policy proposals are implemented and identify risks, unintended consequences, or practical barriers. It does not make judgments on the appropriateness of the underlying policy aims or legislative priorities.

In late 2025 I asked the RRG to advise me on the sequencing, timing and interdependencies of key housing-related reforms relating to housing quality and standards, with the aim of supporting effective delivery and managing potential cumulative impacts on supply. The RRG met with my officials several times during which they discussed a range of issues in relation to our proposed programme of work.

This input was helpful in informing a realistic approach to the Heat in Buildings programme, taking account of consumer understanding and the wider impacts on fuel poverty and health, as well as emissions. As a first step, I am confident that a number of foundational actions are required to establish the right conditions for the programme to continue to develop. These include:

- Reaffirming our commitment to our buildings decarbonisation targets, as set out in both the draft Climate Change Plan and draft Buildings (Heating and Energy Performance) and Heat Networks (Scotland) Bill which were both published in November 2025.
- Taking forward EPC Reform which can provide landlords and consumers with a clear understanding of how the heat retention of buildings will be measured. As you know, regulations were approved by Parliament in December 2025 and are due to come into force this October – though I have already written to advise you of the risk of a potential delay to the UK Government Home Energy Model.
- Continuing and refining advice services and delivery schemes, alongside a national communications campaign to raise awareness of the support that is already available, particularly where this can help households to reduce energy bills. Subject to the draft Budget being approved, it is my intention to continue these schemes in 2026-27.

For 2026/27, we have allocated over £330 million to support clean heat and energy efficiency measures across Scotland, enabling an estimated 20,000 households to make upgrades. Around 60% of this funding will be directed to those most at risk of fuel poverty. Over the spending review period, we will continue this work through £1.3 billion of investment, supporting progress towards net zero, reducing fuel poverty, creating jobs across Scotland, and developing essential infrastructure such as heat networks.

From this foundation, the programme will move into a phase of establishing standards, both in the private rented sector and social rented sector, with provisions for owner occupied properties included in the draft Buildings (Heating and Energy Performance) and Heat Networks (Scotland) Bill and subject to later regulation. Subject to the outcome of the election, it is also my intention that the provisions in the draft Bill in relation to mandatory connection requirements for public sector buildings and larger non-domestic properties will be taken forward. These measures are intended to provide greater certainty and help create the conditions for investment in heat networks across the country. During this period, I would also expect the EPC programme to embed, supported by clear public communications.

In the longer term, it is essential to focus on the wider conditions needed to decarbonise buildings in a way that is accessible and affordable. I therefore expect sustained emphasis within the programme on developing the market conditions, skills and supply chain to support the carbon emission reductions and deliver wider societal benefits through the expansion of energy efficient, clean-heated homes.

More details are available here: [Regulatory Review Group - gov.scot](#). A letter from the RRG on Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards is available here: [Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard: letter to Cabinet Secretary for Housing - gov.scot](#).

I am grateful to the RRG and its chair, Professor Griggs, for its advice and will continue to discuss these matters with the Group.

Yours sincerely,

Màiri McAllan