

**Debate Pack**

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# Energy efficiency of homes in the north of England

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## Summary

A Westminster Hall debate on the energy efficiency of homes in the north of England is scheduled for Wednesday 6 July 2022, from 2:30-4:00pm. The debate will be led by Peter Gibson MP.

## Government policy on improving the energy efficiency of homes

The Government published the [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#) and the [Net Zero Strategy](#) in October 2021. These set out the Government's plans to improve the energy efficiency of homes.

Several of the plans are based on improving the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of buildings. EPCs rate how energy efficient a building is, with ratings from band A (very efficient) to band G (inefficient). They also estimate how costly it will be to heat and light the property, and what the greenhouse gas emissions of the property are likely to be.

The plans include:

- Delivering the [Future Homes Standard](#) to ensure that new-build homes in England are “ready for net zero” from 2025.
- Upgrading fuel poor homes in England to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band C “where reasonably practicable”. (
- Consulting on phasing in higher minimum performance standards to ensure all homes meet EPC Band C by 2035, “where cost-effective, practical and affordable”
- Setting long-term regulatory standards to upgrade privately rented homes to EPC band C by 2028.
- Considering setting a long-term regulatory standard to improve social housing to EPC band C, subject to consultation.
- Funding energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating systems in existing homes.

The Government published the [British Energy Security Strategy](#) in April 2022. This proposed additional support to improve the energy efficiency of homes, including:

- Removing VAT on installations of energy saving materials (such as insulation and low carbon heating) for the next five years.

- Supporting retail lenders to offer consumers low-cost finance for energy efficiency measures.
- Launching an energy advice service to help consumers improve the energy performance of their homes.
- Reviewing the practical planning barriers households can face when installing energy efficiency measures, including in conservation areas and listed buildings by the end of 2022.

The Heat and Buildings Strategy and the British Energy Security Strategy were credited for setting high ambitions. However, they were criticised for a perceived “limited focus” on energy efficiency measures. In its annual [Progress Report to Parliament \(PDF\)](#), published 29 June 2022, the Committee Change Committee (CCC) said “Sharply rising fuel costs should have given added impetus to improving energy efficiency, yet the necessary programmes are not in place.”

## Energy efficiency in the north of England

Energy efficiency can be measured through the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) which assigns one of seven bands to a dwelling from A (most energy efficient) to G (least energy efficient).

In 2019, Yorkshire and the Humber had the lowest proportion of any English region of dwellings in the top three bands (A-C). The North East had among the highest share in these three bands and the smallest proportion in the two lowest bands (F and G).

Energy efficiency rating of dwellings in England, 2019					
	A/B/C	D	E	F	G
North East	43.3%	49.2%	6.1%	0.8%	0.6%
North West	39.7%	50.0%	7.7%	2.4%	0.3%
Yorkshire & Humber	34.3%	51.9%	10.9%	2.5%	0.4%
East Midlands	37.6%	48.4%	11.1%	1.9%	0.9%
West Midlands	35.9%	50.2%	10.3%	3.0%	0.7%
East	40.6%	46.3%	9.2%	3.2%	0.7%
London	43.9%	44.3%	10.4%	1.1%	0.4%
South East	44.5%	44.9%	7.7%	2.2%	0.6%
South West	41.4%	42.5%	10.4%	4.4%	1.3%
<b>England</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>47.2%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>

Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. (2022). English Housing Survey: Fuel Poverty Dataset, 2019. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8891, [DOI: 10.5255/UKDA-SN-8891-1](https://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8891-1)

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme started in 2013 and requires energy suppliers to fund heating and insulation measures in homes. It is funded through a levy on energy bills. Much of the support has been focussed on low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households. Up to March 2022, the three regions in northern England had received more installations under ECO than any other regions or nations in Great Britain.

<b>Energy Company Obligation installations per 1,000</b>	
January 2013 to March 2022	
England	125.5
North East	184.9
North West	206.2
Yorkshire & Humber	193.4
East Midlands	135.9
West Midlands	179.1
East	79.4
London	63.2
South East	70.2
South West	90.0
Wales	132.5
Scotland	167.3
<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>129.7</b>

Source: BEIS, [Household Energy Efficiency Statistics, headline release June 2022](#)

The [Levelling Up White Paper](#) (2 February 2022) includes plans to improve energy efficiency by providing funding for “the worst performing homes and those least able to pay”. It also noted the economic opportunities of energy efficiency, as upgrading homes and workplaces could support over 240,000 low carbon jobs by 2035.

In March 2022, the Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) published analysis showing that [households in fuel poverty are disproportionately found in the north of England \(one million homes\) and the East Midlands](#). The ECIU also found these regions have the highest proportion of homes below the Government’s EPC target.

## Advice for constituents on energy efficiency

The Library has published a series of briefings to help to advise constituents on energy efficiency. These include:

- [Help with energy efficiency, heating and renewable energy in homes](#) - this describes support schemes available for energy efficiency and domestic generation of heat and power, and links to further advice;
- [Q&A: Energy efficiency in old houses](#) - this answers commonly asked questions about improving energy efficiency in older domestic buildings, including upgrading these buildings and sources of financial assistance.

# 1

## What is energy efficiency?

Energy efficiency means using less energy to perform the same task. For buildings, actions to improve energy efficiency typically focus on retaining heat, and on using less energy to generate heat and light. Interventions to improve the energy efficiency of buildings include: insulation of the walls, loft and floor; double or triple glazing; draught proofing; smarter appliances; and superior heating systems.

The Government has sought to improve the energy efficiency of homes, with aims including:

- reducing energy use – with targeted impacts including lower household bills, lower rates of fuel poverty, lower greenhouse gas emissions from homes, lowering the costs associated with installing low carbon heating in homes, and lowering the scale of future investment required in new energy infrastructure;
- supporting and/or creating green jobs in the energy efficiency sector and stimulating economic growth;
- making buildings healthier and more comfortable.<sup>1</sup>

The next section explains key Government policies and strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), [British Energy Security Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 7 April 2022; BEIS, [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021; BEIS, [Net Zero Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021

## 2

# Government policy on the energy efficiency of homes

## 2.1

### Heat and Buildings Strategy

The [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#) was published alongside the [Net Zero Strategy](#) in October 2021.<sup>2</sup> Together the two strategies set out the Government's plans to improve the energy efficiency of homes.

Several of the plans are based on improving the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of buildings. EPCs rate how energy efficient a building is, with ratings from band A (very efficient) to band G (inefficient). They also estimate how costly it will be to heat and light the property, and what the greenhouse gas emissions of the property are likely to be.<sup>3</sup>

The plans include:

- Delivering the [Future Homes Standard](#) to ensure that new-build homes in England are “ready for net zero” from 2025. The standard will ensure that new-build homes are “future-proofed” with high levels of energy efficiency and low carbon heating.
- Upgrading fuel poor homes in England to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band C where “reasonably practicable”.<sup>4</sup>
- Consulting on phasing in higher minimum performance standards to ensure as many homes as possible meet EPC Band C by 2035, “where cost-effective, practical and affordable”.<sup>5</sup>
- Setting long-term regulatory standards to upgrade Privately Rented Homes to EPC C by 2028.<sup>6</sup> The Government said it would respond to its [consultation on this](#) “by the end of the year”.<sup>7</sup>
- Considering setting a long-term regulatory standard to improve social housing to EPC band C, subject to consultation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> BEIS, [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021; BEIS, [Net Zero Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021, pp135-136

<sup>3</sup> The Energy Saving Trust has a [Guide to Energy Performance Certificates](#) which provides more information.

<sup>4</sup> BEIS, [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021, p21 and p162

<sup>5</sup> BEIS, [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021, p24

<sup>6</sup> BEIS, [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021, p24

<sup>7</sup> BEIS, [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021, p167

<sup>8</sup> BEIS, [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021, p166



- Providing additional funding to upgrade existing homes by installing energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating systems, notably through the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG -additional £950 million over 2022/23 to 2024/25) and the [Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund](#) (additional £800 million over 2022/23 to 2024/25).<sup>9</sup>

These commitments built on existing policies set out in the [Clean Growth Strategy](#) (October 2017), the [Ten Point Plan for an Industrial Revolution](#) (November 2020), and the [Energy White Paper](#) (December 2020).

## 2.2

### British Energy Security Strategy

The [British Energy Security Strategy](#) (April 2022) proposed the following additional support to help improve the energy efficiency of homes:

- Zero-rating VAT on the installation of energy saving materials, including insulation and low carbon heating, for the next 5 years;
- Supporting retail lenders to offer consumers low cost finance for energy efficiency measures. The Government will double its innovation funding for new green finance products for consumers to £20 million, and introduce a scheme for lenders to improve the energy performance of the properties against which they lend;
- Launching an energy advice service on GOV.UK to help consumers improve the energy performance of their homes, as well as telephone support and advice specific to local areas;
- Setting energy performance standards varying by building type, to be phased in over the long-term;
- Reviewing the practical planning barriers that households can face when installing energy efficiency measures including in conservation areas and listed buildings by the end of 2022.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.3

### Reaction

The British Energy Security Strategy was credited for setting high ambitions.<sup>11</sup> However, both it and the Heat and Buildings Strategy and were criticised for

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<sup>9</sup> BEIS, [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 19 October 2021, p24

<sup>10</sup> Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), [British Energy Security Strategy](#), GOV.UK, 7 April 2022, pp12-13

<sup>11</sup> CCC, [CCC responds to UK Government's Energy Security Strategy](#), 7 April 2022;

their perceived “limited” or “little” focus on energy efficiency measures.<sup>12</sup> Several organisations have called for more to be done.

The Institute for Government said that while the Heat and Buildings Strategy targeted social housing and the fuel poor, [there was “no clear plan” to drive energy efficiency in owner occupied buildings](#).<sup>13</sup> [Aldersgate Group](#) called for the Government to introduced “strong regulatory and fiscal measures to drive the uptake of energy efficiency retrofits” and support the creation of jobs.<sup>14</sup> The [Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit](#) said the new funding announced in the Strategy was insufficient to deliver on home insulation. It estimated that even if all the Strategy’s funding for heat and energy efficiency, as well as funds previously announced in 2021/22, were spent on home insulation, it would “achieve only around 10% of what the CCC recommends we should aim for by 2035”.<sup>15</sup>

Responding to the British Energy Security Strategy, [E.ON](#) CEO Michael Lewis called for more investment in the [Energy Company Obligation](#) scheme to tackle fuel poverty,<sup>16</sup> and [the Energy Saving Trust](#) put forward the case for a new “home energy efficiency programme” for energy consumers.<sup>17</sup> The CCC additionally labelled [the lack of energy efficiency measures “disappointing”](#).<sup>18</sup>

In its annual [Progress Report to Parliament](#), published 29 June 2022, the Committee Change Committee (CCC) said:

In targets, the UK is indeed a world leader. However, this Progress Report reveals that, despite important achievements in renewable energy and electric vehicles, the Government is failing in much of its implementation. Sharply rising fuel costs should have given added impetus to improving energy efficiency, yet the necessary programmes are not in place.<sup>19</sup>

The [CCC’s press release](#) summarised its findings on energy efficiency in homes:

Given soaring energy bills, there is a shocking gap in policy for better insulated homes. Government promised significant public spending in 2019 and committed to new policies last year, neither has yet occurred. The UK

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<sup>12</sup> E.ON, [“We needed an Energy Security Strategy to set a course for a zero carbon future and to help protect customers...”](#), 7 April 2022; Carbon Brief, [In-depth Q&A: How will the UK’s ‘heat and buildings strategy’ help achieve net-zero?](#), 20 October 2021

<sup>13</sup> Institute for Government, [The heat and buildings strategy shows the government is grappling with the right problems](#), 25 October 2021

<sup>14</sup> Aldersgate Group, [Heat and Buildings Strategy: energy efficiency in buildings is key to decarbonisation](#), 18 October 2021

<sup>15</sup> Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit, [Gaps in new Strategy leave UK homes leaking heat](#), 20 October 2021

<sup>16</sup> E.ON, [“We needed an Energy Security Strategy to set a course for a zero carbon future and to help protect customers...”](#), 7 April 2022

<sup>17</sup> Energy Saving Trust, [Energy Saving Trust responds to UK Government’s Energy Security Strategy](#), 7 April 2022

<sup>18</sup> CCC, [CCC responds to UK Government’s Energy Security Strategy](#), 7 April 2022

<sup>19</sup> CCC, [Progress in reducing emissions: 2022 Report to Parliament \[PDF\]](#), 29 June 2022, p9

continues to have some of the leakiest homes in Europe and installations of insulation remain at rock bottom – the average annual energy bill for UK households is around £40 higher than if insulation rates from pre-2012 had continued for the last decade. Much now rests on the promised energy advice service, which must be a major undertaking that reaches millions of households and supports them through implementation of options to cut their bills and emissions.<sup>20</sup>

The [Press Association](#) reported that in response to the CCC’s report, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Kwasi Kwarteng said insulation is “a real challenge”, and that the Government is hopeful it can get a new energy efficiency scheme “up and running”.<sup>21</sup>

## 2.4 Previous policy: the Green Homes Grant

As part of the [Chancellor’s July 2020 statement ‘A plan for jobs’](#), the Government announced it would introduce the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme (GHGVS), a £2 billion scheme that aimed to upgrade over 600,000 homes across England.<sup>22</sup> The scheme would provide up to £10,000 per household to fund energy efficiency measures and was expected to support over 100,000 green jobs.

While the GHGVS was welcomed by stakeholders, there was concern about some administrative issues with the scheme’s delivery.<sup>23</sup> To address this, in November 2020 the Government extended the planned end date of the GHGVS from March 2021 to March 2022.<sup>24</sup> However, in February 2021 the Government said [any underspent funding of the scheme would not be rolled over](#) into the 2021-22 financial year.<sup>25</sup> The scheme closed to applications early on 31 March 2021.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) [reported on the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme](#) on 1 December 2021, stating that despite commendable intentions the GHGVS:

underperformed badly, upgrading around 47,500 homes compared to the 600,000 originally envisaged, delivering a small fraction of the expected jobs and accounting for just £314 million out of the original £1.5 billion budget.

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<sup>20</sup> CCC, [Current programmes will not deliver Net Zero](#), 29 June 2022

<sup>21</sup> Press Association, [UK has insulation ‘challenge’, admits Business Secretary after critical report](#), Belfast Telegraph, 29 June 2022

<sup>22</sup> HM Treasury (HMT), [A Plan for Jobs 2020](#), GOV.UK, 8 July 2020

<sup>23</sup> Environmental Audit Committee, correspondence from the Chair to Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP on [“Energy efficiency of existing homes: Feedback from our survey on the Green Homes Grant”](#), 11 December 2020

<sup>24</sup> BEIS and Lord Callanan, [Green Homes Grant extended for extra year](#), GOV.UK, 18 November 2020

<sup>25</sup> PQ 145087 [on [Green Homes Grant Scheme](#)], 2 February 2021

Administration costs are likely to amount to more than £1,000 per home upgraded, totalling just over £50 million in all.<sup>26</sup>

The Library briefing [Green Homes Grant](#) (31 March 2021) provides more information.

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<sup>26</sup> Public Accounts Committee, [Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme \[PDF\]](#), 24 November 2021, HC 635 2021-22, p3

## 3 Energy efficiency in the north of England

### 3.1 Energy efficiency of dwellings

Energy efficiency can be measured through the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) which assigns one of seven bands to a dwelling from A (most energy efficient) to G (least energy efficient). In 2019 Yorkshire and the Humber had the lowest proportion of any English region of dwellings in the top three bands (A-C). The North East had among the highest share in these three bands and the smallest proportion in the two lowest bands (F and G).

Energy efficiency rating of dwellings in England, 2019					
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<b>England</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>47.2%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>

Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. (2022). *English Housing Survey: Fuel Poverty Dataset, 2019*. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8891, DOI: [10.5255/UKDA-SN-8891-1](https://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8891-1)

### 3.2 Insulation and heating installed under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The ECO scheme started in 2013 and requires energy suppliers to fund heating and insulation measures in homes. It is funded through a levy on energy bills. Much of the support has been focussed on low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households. Up to March 2022 the three regions in Northern England had received more installations under ECO than any other regions/nations in Great Britain.

## Energy Company Obligation installations per 1,000

January 2013 to March 2022

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North East	184.9
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London	63.2
South East	70.2
South West	90.0
Wales	132.5
Scotland	167.3
<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>129.7</b>

Source: BEIS, [Household Energy Efficiency Statistics, headline release June 2022](#)

### 3.3

## Age of Dwellings

Around one quarter of homes in the North West were built before 1918; the second highest rate of any region in England. The North East has one of the smallest shares of homes built before 1944 and the highest proportion built in the two decades after World War II.

### Age of dwellings in English regions, 2019

	Pre-1918	1919-44	1945-64	1965-1974	1975-1990	Post 1990
North East	13.1%	13.4%	27.4%	14.5%	11.8%	19.7%
North West	25.3%	15.9%	17.1%	13.5%	11.1%	17.1%
Yorkshire & Humber	20.9%	16.1%	19.9%	13.8%	12.4%	16.9%
East Midlands	18.4%	13.3%	15.9%	12.0%	15.8%	24.6%
West Midlands	17.7%	17.1%	21.8%	17.2%	11.2%	15.0%
East	14.8%	11.4%	20.4%	16.7%	15.8%	21.0%
London	26.6%	25.0%	13.5%	8.8%	11.7%	14.4%
South East	16.3%	12.5%	17.4%	15.0%	19.9%	18.9%
South West	21.2%	10.5%	16.4%	13.5%	14.9%	23.5%
<b>England</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>18.6%</b>

Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. (2022). *English Housing Survey: Fuel Poverty Dataset, 2019*. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8891, [DOI: 10.5255/UKDA-SN-8891-1](https://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8891-1)

## 3.4

# Energy efficiency and levelling up

The [Levelling Up White Paper](#) (2 February 2022) included plans to improve the quality of housing. The Government said it will “address [...] poor energy efficiency by targeting retrofit funding at the worst performing homes and those least able to pay”, citing the Future Homes Standard and funding schemes announced in the Heat and Buildings Strategy.<sup>27</sup> It also noted the economic opportunities of energy efficiency:

£3.9bn is being invested to make buildings more energy efficient and move to low carbon heat. Upgrading our homes and workplaces could rapidly create new opportunities and support over 240,000 low-carbon jobs by 2035 across the sector – from manufacture to installation and modelling to project management – as part of a green recovery, while also reducing energy bills and delivering better, greener, and healthier homes and workplaces.<sup>28</sup>

In March 2022 the Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) published [analysis showing that households in fuel poverty are disproportionately found in the North \(one million homes\) and the Midlands \(700,000 ones\)](#).<sup>29</sup> Together these regions represent 55% of all homes in fuel poverty in England. The ECIU also found these regions to have the highest proportion of homes below the Government’s EPC target. It made the case that a focus on energy efficiency would support jobs in these regions (as the need for jobs will be highest in areas with large numbers of homes with poor energy efficiency). It specifically suggested this could support the levelling up agenda in marginal seats.

The [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill 2022-23](#) was introduced in the House of Commons on 11 May 2022.<sup>30</sup> The Library briefing on [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill 2022-23](#) provides more information.

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<sup>27</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), GOV.UK, 2 February 2022, p258

<sup>28</sup> DLUHC, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), GOV.UK, 2 February 2022, p170

<sup>29</sup> Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit, [Levelling up or letting down?](#), 11 March 2022

<sup>30</sup> [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill](#) 006 2022-23 [as introduced]

## 4

# Parliamentary

## Debate

### Retrofitting Buildings: National Strategy

Members discussed various aspects of energy efficiency in homes including the Green Homes Grant, targets, green skills and costs. The following reproduces a selection of questions and responses from the debate.

Asked by: Baroness Blackstone

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to publish the lessons learned from the Green Homes Grant, and (2) to introduce a national strategy for retrofitting buildings.

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con)

The government response to the Public Accounts Committee report on the green homes grant voucher scheme, published on 24 February 2022, discussed a number of lessons. IPSOS is also undertaking an independent evaluation, due for publication in autumn 2023. The heat and buildings strategy sets out the actions that we will be taking to reduce emissions from buildings and provides the long-term framework to enable industry to invest and deliver the transition to low-carbon heating.

Baroness Blackstone (Ind Lab)

My Lords, I thank the Minister for her reply, but I am sure she will agree that the failure of the green homes grant, which was eventually scrapped, was largely due to the lack of skilled and trained workers in the construction industry to undertake the work needed. Should not the short-term measures that were involved in the green homes grant be replaced by a genuine long-term funded strategy that emphasises training and skilling? Does she agree that, without that, it is very likely that we will not achieve our decarbonisation targets, and fuel poverty will go on increasing?

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con)

I could not agree more with the thrust of the noble Baroness's question. The heat and buildings strategy is designed to provide a long-term framework for these initiatives. We are investing £2.5 billion in a national skills fund to support the immediate economic recovery and the skills needed to deliver on



our net-zero targets, and we invested £6.9 million alongside the green homes grant voucher scheme to deliver over 8,000 training opportunities. We are continuing to work with businesses and key industry bodies and have launched the Green Jobs Taskforce to produce an action plan for just this sort of initiative.

Baroness Sugg (Con)

My Lords, can my noble friend the Minister explain why home retrofit schemes are so hard for the Government to deliver?

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con)

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to tackling the UK's diverse housing stock—that is part of the problem. Successfully delivering a retrofitting scheme has to balance a number of variables, including complexity, choice, value for money and quality assurance. It also has to address some of the fraud that took place in earlier schemes. The “fabric first” approach to retrofitting buildings before installing heat pumps is sensible, but it has a much longer-term time horizon, which also adds to the complexity of the scheme. Do not forget that, over the past 10 years, the Government have been successful in delivering a number of schemes, such as the energy company obligation, the renewable heat incentive and the green homes deal improvement fund. Over that timescale, we increased the number of houses with energy rating C from 14% to 46%.

09 Jun 2022 | Oral questions | Answered | House of Lords | 822 cc1242-831

## Questions

[Housing: Energy](#)

**Asked by:** Foxcroft, Vicky | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to introduce a minimum energy efficiency standard for all homes in the England.

**Answering member:** Greg Hands | **Party:** Conservative Party  
| **Department:** Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Government committed in the Clean Growth Strategy to improve as many homes as possible to EPC Band C by 2035 and as many private rental homes as possible to EPC band C by 2030 where practical, affordable and cost effective. In England, 46% of homes are now at EPC C or better, up from 14% in 2010.

In the Net Zero Strategy, the Government committed to consult on phasing in higher minimum standards across all sectors to meet this ambition. The Government has already consulted on higher standards in the private rented sector and will publish a Government Response in due course.

17 Jun 2022 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 14549

### [Housing: Energy](#)

**Asked by:** Maskell, Rachael | **Party:** Labour Party · Cooperative Party

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reason he has not announced proposals on retrofitting homes to reduce energy use and costs.

**Answering member:** Helen Whately | **Party:** Conservative Party  
| **Department:** Treasury

At the spending review, the Government committed to invest £3 billion over this Parliament to improve the energy efficiency of up to 500,000 low-income homes, reducing energy bills by hundreds of pounds per year.

We are also expanding the Energy Company Obligation to £1 billion per year from 2022 to 2026, helping 133,000 low-income households annually to also improve their energy efficiency.

At the Spring Statement, the Chancellor announced the removal of the 5 per cent VAT charge on the installation of energy-efficiency materials over the next five years. This represents a £280 million tax cut to support investment in energy efficiency over the next 5 years. This is additional to the total support for households this year of over £37bn.

06 Jun 2022 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 9928

### [Energy: Housing](#)

**Asked by:** Stafford, Alexander | **Party:** Conservative Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what further steps he is taking to improve the energy efficiency of domestic buildings.

**Answering member:** Greg Hands | **Party:** Conservative Party  
| **Department:** Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The UK has made good progress in improving energy performance of homes. 46% of homes in England are now EPC Band C or above, up from 12% in 2009.

Furthermore, Government is investing over £6.6 billion over this parliament to continue improving energy efficiency. This funding will help to deliver upgrades through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Energy Company Obligation, Local Authority Delivery and Home Upgrade Grant Schemes. The new £450 million Boiler Upgrade Scheme will provide upfront grants towards the cost of a heat pump or biomass boiler.

The Government is also Zero-rating VAT for the next five years on the installation of insulation and low-carbon heating.

01 Jun 2022 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 8235

### [Housing: Energy](#)

**Asked by:** Maskell, Rachael | **Party:** Labour Party · Cooperative Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he has taken to invest in the skills required for retrofitting homes; and what estimate he has made of the number of people supporting retrofitting programmes.

**Answering member:** Greg Hands | **Party:** Conservative Party  
| **Department:** Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Government recognises the need for a skilled, competent and robust supply chain to deliver the improvements to buildings necessary to meet the Government's net zero targets.

The Department spent almost £6 million on a skills training competition which delivered around 7,000 training opportunities for the energy efficiency and low carbon heating supply chains.

The Government has also previously provided £4.7 million of funding over a period of two and a half years to six local supply chain demonstration pilots which tested innovative approaches for supporting and growing the energy efficiency installer supply chain.

There are over 1,600 TrustMark registered companies that are able to work on BEIS retrofitting schemes and these companies will employ more individuals that are able to work on home retrofit.

18 Mar 2022 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 137375

### [Listed Buildings: Energy](#)

**Asked by:** Vickers, Matt | **Party:** Conservative Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to assist homeowners in (a) grade two listed and (b) other protected properties to make upgrades to their homes to be more energy efficient.

**Answering member:** Greg Hands | **Party:** Conservative Party  
| **Department:** Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

There are a number of Government schemes to support low-income households improve the energy efficiency of their homes, including the £787 million Local Authority Delivery Scheme and the £1.1 billion Home Upgrade Grant.

Growing the market for Green Finance is a priority for Government to help support homeowners not eligible for grants with the upfront costs of improvement. The £1.8m Green Home Finance Innovation Fund, which will be completed by March 2022, is a key early step in supporting the lending community to design, develop and pilot green mortgage products for homeowners.

A follow-up £10 million Green Home Finance Accelerator programme will launch this summer with the aim of supporting lenders to develop a wider range of green lending products for homeowners. This could include products for owners of harder to treat properties, including historic buildings.

28 Feb 2022 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 125583

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## Press

Financial Times, [What the energy efficiency drive means for UK property rentals](#), 1 July 2022

Energy Live News, [E.ON chief: “Energy efficiency the only silver bullet for this crisis”](#), 9 June 2022

Independent, [Put energy efficiency ahead of gas bill bailouts, says CBI chief Danker](#), 7 Jun 2022\*

Guardian, [Sunak's UK oil subsidy could have insulated 2m homes, says thinktank](#), 31 May 2022

Financial Times, [Quarter of UK households look to improve energy efficiency as bills surge](#), 27 May 2022

Independent, [The time is now for the government to take radical steps over housing](#), 20 May 2022\*

Telegraph, [Rishi Sunak blocks green homes plan that would have lowered energy bills](#), 5 April 2022\*

Financial Times, [UK's energy overhaul must confront abject failures on efficiency](#), 3 March 2022

Telegraph, [Owners of 'leaky' Victorian homes face £400 energy bill rise. Older homes are often expensive to upgrade](#), 1 March 2022\*

Independent, [The real cost of making your home energy-efficient](#), 2 Feb 2022\*

\*accessed via [Nexis News](#)

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# Advice for constituents on energy efficiency

The following Library briefings may be helpful in advising constituents on energy efficiency measures and support available to help with installing these:

- [Help with energy efficiency, heating and renewable energy in homes](#) - this describes support schemes available for energy efficiency and domestic generation of heat and power, and links to further advice;
- [Q&A: Energy efficiency in old houses](#) - this answers commonly asked questions about improving energy efficiency in older domestic buildings, including upgrading these buildings and sources of financial assistance.
- [Energy Company Obligation \(ECO\)](#)
- [Q&A: Cavity Wall Insulation](#)
- [Help with energy bills](#)

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## Further information

The following Library briefings provide further information on related issues:

### Energy efficiency and decarbonising homes

- [Housing and net zero](#) (13 August 2020)
- House of Lords Library In Focus article on [Home insulation and the net zero target](#) (17 June 2020)
- POSTnote on [Environmental housing standards](#)
- POSTbrief on [Reducing the whole life carbon impact of buildings](#)

### Energy prices and security of energy supply

- [Domestic energy prices](#)
- [British Energy Security Strategy](#)
- [Where will Britain's future energy supply come from?](#)

### Fuel poverty

- [Fuel poverty in the UK](#)

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