**SFHA Energy and Net Zero Forum**

**Thursday 24 April**

**Note of Meeting**

1. **Welcome**

34 attendees welcomed to the meeting.

1. **Update of the Reform of EPCs in Scotland – Scottish Government - Ross Loveridge, Head of Heat in Buildings Performance Unit and Patrick Mason, Technical Lead on EPC Reform**

* Current EPC is a measurement of energy cost rather than fabric efficiency - therefore ratings rank homes with cheaper gas heating above than low-emission or efficient systems with good insulation.
* Certificates are often difficult for users to understand and ratings can be inaccurate or of low quality due to the basic nature of the assessment. SG undertaking redesign of EPC certificates including consideration of a digital tool where people can input data on lifestyle/household/preferences - to measure the impact on the cost of energy and household efficiency

Parliamentary reforms:

* Ministers responded to the 2023 consultations in January, with final decision on reforms
* Draft regulations will be introduced in Parliament in September/October 2025
* New regulations will come into force by Autumn 2026, allowing sector and market to adjust to new regulations

Main changes:

* New rating system on domestic buildings to include heat retention rating (building fabric), heating system type rating (efficiency) and cost-based rating
* New technical infrastructure - SAP at end of life and needs to be replaced. New UK Government Home Energy Model will be adopted as calculation methodology, with Scottish wrapper to reflect differences
* Redesigned EPC certificates with user-friendly layouts informed with user layouts.
* Launch of a digital tool alongside EPCs where users can input preferences, lifestyle and household information for tailored energy use estimates.
* Operational governance improvements - including stronger accreditation for assessors, improved auditing and enhanced consumer protections

Discussion:

* 5 year EPC requirements - confirmed intention to maintain 5 year reassessments unless the property is not being advertised for let/sale. EPC can lapse on longer tenancies with no requirement for this to be renewed.
* Digital EPC being developed for users to input household specific information for better energy cost estimations - not necessarily for the EPC assessor but the households. SG is at the discovery stage of this currently.
* Transition to HEM is expected to cause minimal disruptions, with approx 80% of properties remaining in their current EPC band, and some stock improving.
* HEM will provide more realistic cost ratings using up-to-date energy prices but a reference year will be retained for consistency

1. **Showcase of Sava Software - Mark Sreeves**

* Sava offers energy efficiency calculation software for social landlords, currently using SAP/RD SA. Will incorporate HEM methodology once available.
* Supports dynamic management of stock energy performance through integration with housing and asset management systems
* Real-time updates linking property data and energy performance. Current focus on achieving EESSH2 EPC B targets to 2032 while we await confirmation of SHNZS.

1. **SFHA Policy Update**

* SFHA are producing a series of policy papers in the lead up to the 2026 Scottish elections. The first paper ['Meeting the challenge of net zero'](https://www.sfha.co.uk/sites/default/files/2025-04/PDF%20-%20Road%20to%202026%20paper.pdf) calls for clarity of the social housing net zero standard and highlights the inadequacy of funding. Calls to action include increased funding and finance support, scaling up delivery and ensuring a just transition for social tenants.
* Scottish Futures Trust recently published a [report](https://www.scottishfuturestrust.org.uk/publications/documents/financing-and-funding-the-decarbonisation-of-scotlands-social-housing-summary-report-1) around funding and finance models, including calls for the net zero heat fund to be scaled up and supported by a dedicated support unit. SFHA supported this proposal but keen to discuss with members further how this can best support RSLs.
* Work is ongoing to finalise the Social Housing Net Zero Standard - with review group meeting in March. SG is reviewing feedback from the group and considering implications for the Heat in Buildings bill. It has been confirmed that HiB will be introduced this year, but with a change in approach from that originally proposed.
* Social Housing Net Zero Heat Fund - applications open for the final checkpoint of the current scheme from end of March until mid-May. As with previous rounds, the fund is open to all energy efficiency and clean heat projects - but providers must draw down funding by March 2026. SFHA continue to make the case that these timescales are unrealistic for larger projects, and the competitive nature of the fund is not effective.
* SFHA hosted an in-person workshop in March with Energy UK and Wheatley - the session brough together energy suppliers and frontline staff to discuss ongoing challenges around delays with meter installations in voids - sharing good and bad practice to identify opportunities for collaboration between housing and energy sectors
* RTS - approaching deadline for shutdown in June. Sector has ongoing concerns about pace of progress - particularly in rural and island communities. SFHA and members meeting with Ofgem in May to discuss - with focus on RTS and the experiences of tenants and members.
* Consultations on smart meters and standards of performance - consumers face significant delays and challenges with operations. Considerations around compensation payment when standards are not met, if installation fails or meters are not working as intended. Draft will be shared with forum members for comment.
* SFHA has recently launched a new website - this includes tailored experience for members and new digital forums. This space is intended to replace our Teams channels and will be used for improved communication and information sharing. Members are encouraged to re-register for the new website and engage with the digital forums.

Any questions on the above can be directed to [cdove@sfha.co.uk](mailto:cdove@sfha.co.uk)

1. **Practice sharing/ideas for future forums**

* Maryhill/Queens Cross feasibility study of housing archetypes
* Member project case studies - to share good practice and learnings
* Energy/fuel poverty perspective on addressing condensation, damp and mould

1. **2025 forum dates**

Remaining forums for the year will be on:

Thursday 14 August - [Energy and Net Zero - August | SFHA](https://www.sfha.co.uk/events-forums/energy-and-net-zero-august)

Thursday 6 November - [Energy and Net Zero - November | SFHA](https://www.sfha.co.uk/events-forums/energy-and-net-zero-november)