



Respondent Information Form

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Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- ☐ Individual
- ☒ Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

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The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

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Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Questionnaire

Question 1

To what extent do you support our proposal to prohibit the use of polluting heating systems in all buildings after 2045?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☒ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar recognises that the use of polluting heating systems in all buildings will have to end to meet the target of Net Zero by 2045. However, there is concern that switching to clean heating systems will lead to increased fuel costs in na h-Eileanan Siar, which already experiences the highest rates of fuel poverty in Scotland. A fabric first approach, whereby the energy efficiency of homes is improved prior to switching from polluting heating systems to clean heating systems, is required to mitigate against this risk.

The Comhairle strongly supports extra time being given to those homes and businesses which have no clean heating solutions available to them, and the development of an assessment tool to support building owners to understand options available to them.

The Comhairle strongly supports that the prohibition on polluting heating will only apply to the main heating system of a property, with emergency back-ups exempt, to ensure resilience in our island communities which are particularly vulnerable to power outages.

Question 2

To what extent do you agree that we should introduce a minimum energy efficiency standard to be met by private sector landlords by the end of 2028 (even if they are already using clean heating)?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☒ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

The Comhairle supports a minimum energy efficiency standard for landlords as this will reduce fuel costs for tenants. However, there is concern that the early target date is unrealistic for landlords in na h-Eileanan Siar, due to the poor energy efficiency of buildings generally. The introduction of a minimum energy efficiency standard for private landlords could potentially lead to a reduction in rental properties available with the further potential for negative economic impacts on the housing market and tourism. Na h-Eileanan Siar has a high level of empty homes and there is the risk that the numbers of empty homes will increase further if properties fail the standard and are therefore withdrawn from the letting market.

Question 3

To what extent do you agree that we should introduce a minimum energy efficiency standard to be met in owner occupied homes (which still have a polluting heating system) by the end of 2033?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☒ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

The Comhairle supports a minimum energy efficiency standard for owner occupied homes as improved energy efficiency of homes would have the positive impacts of reducing household fuel costs, with the potential to reduce fuel poverty rates in the islands as well as contributing towards net zero targets. However, it must be ensured that the minimum energy efficiency standard set is appropriate for all building types, including the traditionally constructed buildings prevalent in na h-Eileanan Siar.

There is also concern that the target date of 2033 is unrealistic for na h-Eileanan Siar, due to the poor energy efficiency of buildings which is currently significantly worse than the national average.

Significant financial support would be required for households in na h-Eileanan Siar to meet the minimum energy efficiency standard proposals. Retrofit is likely to cost significantly more in the islands and rural communities compared to mainland and urban areas owing to access to materials in addition to the fabric, build and age of the housing stock. Projections suggest that the population in na h-Eileanan Siar will continue to age and the ability to afford retrofit is likely to be impacted by the lower economically active population.

Question 4

Do you agree with our proposal to set a minimum energy efficiency standard that can be met by either installing a straightforward list of measures, or showing a good level of energy efficiency based on a reformed EPC fabric efficiency metric?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☒ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar agrees that a minimum energy efficiency standard could be set using either a list of measure or demonstration of a good energy efficiency based on a reformed EPC, however, it is important that the standard is appropriate for all building types, including the traditionally constructed buildings prevalent in na h-Eileanan Siar.

Question 5

What is your view on the initial proposed list of measures to meet the minimum energy efficiency standard?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☒ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Many of the measures on the proposed list are unlikely to be suitable for a large number of domestic buildings in na h-Eileanan Siar, due to the fabric, build and age of the building stock.

Cavity wall insulation and suspended floor insulation are unlikely to be feasible for the majority of homes in na h-Eileanan Siar. While 270mm loft insulation could have a positive impact on the energy efficiency of homes, the installation of the rest of the measures are unlikely to significantly improve the energy efficiency of homes in na h-Eileanan Siar.

The standard should be appropriate for all building types, including the traditionally constructed buildings prevalent in na h-Eileanan Siar. Homes in na h-Eileanan Siar, where fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty are the highest in Scotland and the energy efficiency of homes is significantly worse than the national average for Scotland, should be enabled to improve energy efficiency.

Question 6

Do you think that properties for which most or all of the measures on the initial proposed list are not relevant should be required to meet an equivalent minimum energy efficiency standard?

- ☐ No – these properties should be considered compliant once they have installed all the measures that are appropriate for their building type, even if this is few or no measures.
- ☒ Yes – they should be required to meet the standard and additional measures should be included on the list (such as solid wall insulation, solid floor insulation and flat roof insulation), and they should be required to install all of these where feasible
- ☐ Yes – they should be required to meet the standard and additional measures should be included on the list (such as solid wall insulation, solid floor insulation and flat roof

insulation), but they should only be required to install some of these where feasible and cost effective

☐ Yes – they should be required to meet the standard and additional measures should be included on the list (such as solid wall insulation, solid floor insulation and flat roof insulation), but they should only be required to install some of these where feasible, and they should be allowed additional time to do so

Please include any additional comments below.

Many of the measures on the proposed list are unlikely to be suitable for a large number of domestic buildings in na h-Eileanan Siar where energy efficiency is significantly poorer than the average for Scotland, and rates of fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty are the highest in Scotland.

There is a significant risk that energy efficiency in na h-Eileanan Siar will fall further behind that of properties elsewhere in Scotland, further exacerbating fuel poverty, if properties are considered compliant once they have installed all measures appropriate for their building type, even if this is few or no measures.

Additional financial support should be made available to support and enable homes which require additional measures such as solid wall insulation to improve energy efficiency.

Question 7

Do you think that an alternative approach to setting the minimum energy efficiency standard is required?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

An alternative approach is required to ensure that households in the islands are not left behind. There is a risk that the current approach will not significantly improve energy efficiency for households in the islands, which currently have significantly poorer energy efficiency than the Scottish average.

The Comhairle strongly opposes that the minimum energy efficiency standard would only apply to owner occupied homes with a polluting heating system. Switching to a clean heating system without achieving a minimum energy efficiency standard is likely to lead to increased fuel costs for households in na h-Eileanan Siar, which has the highest rates of fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty in Scotland, in part due to the poor building energy efficiency of homes.

The Comhairle's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy emphasises a "fabric first" approach, whereby the energy efficiency of homes is improved prior to the installation of clean heating systems, to mitigate against these negative impacts.

Question 8

Do you agree that the use of bioenergy should continue to be permitted in certain circumstances?

- ☐ No, it should be prohibited in all cases
- ☐ Yes, it should be permitted for those buildings already using it
- ☒ Yes, it should be permitted for those buildings who have no other clean heating system available.

Question 9

To what extent do you support the requirement to end the use of polluting heating following a property purchase?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☒ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

The Comhairle recognises that homes will be required to end the use of polluting heating to achieve net zero targets however significant investment will be required to support homes to end the use of polluting heating. The majority of homes in na h-Eileanan Siar currently have polluting heating systems and there is the risk that the additional costs involved in switching to clean heating following a property purchase will present an additional barrier to home ownership and further contribute to

Question 10

We are proposing to give those purchasing a property a 'grace period' to end their use of polluting heating. Do you agree with this proposal?

- ☐ Yes - the grace period should be two years
- ☐ Yes – the grace period should be three years
- ☐ Yes – the grace period should be four years
- ☒ Yes – the grace period should be five years
- ☐ No, please provide reasons for your view.

The Comhairle supports a grace period of 5 years or longer to enable additional time to save towards the costs of ending the use of polluting heating.

Question 11

To what extent do you support our proposal to apply a cost-cap where people are required to end their use of polluting heating following a property purchase?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☒ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please provide reasons for your view.

As homes in the islands are more likely to incur greater costs to achieve a minimum energy efficiency standard and end their use of polluting heating systems, the imposition of a cap risks leaving homeowners in na h-Eileanan Siar unable to access sufficient funding to end their use of polluting heating.

The application of a cost-cap also risks that clean heating systems will be installed prior to energy efficiency improvements being carried out, or that homes will switch to clean heating systems which are cheaper to install but more expensive to run, which could further exacerbate fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty.

Question 12

Which of the following methods of applying a cost-cap do you support?

- ☐ A flat cost-cap
- ☐ A size-based cost-cap
- ☐ A purchase price-based cost-cap
- ☐ None
- ☐ Another, please suggest below

Please provide alternative

Question 13

To what extent do you support the proposal that the Scottish Ministers should be given powers to extend the circumstances in future (beyond a property purchase) in which people could be required to end their use of polluting heating?

This could be, for example, preventing the installation of new fossil fuel boilers when replacing the heating in your home or business premises.

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☒ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Any further changes to the powers given to Scottish Ministers to extend the circumstances in which people could be required to end their use of polluting heating should be subject to further consultation, to ensure no negative impacts for na h-Eileanan Siar.

Question 14

To what extent do you support our proposal to provide local authorities (and Scottish Ministers) with powers to require buildings within a Heat Network Zone to end their use of polluting heating systems by a given date?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☒ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has carried out analysis into the potential for heat networks within na h-Eileanan Siar as required under the Heat Networks Act. No Network Zones have been established or are likely to be established in na h-Eileanan Siar due to the low heat demand density.

Question 15

To what extent do you support our proposal to provide powers to local authorities (or Scottish Ministers) that require developers to connect new buildings within Heat Network Zones to a heat network?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☒ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has carried out analysis into the potential for heat networks within na h-Eileanan Siar as required under the Heat Networks Act and concluded that overall the scale of opportunity for heat networks within na h-Eileanan Siar is low. No Network Zones have been established or are likely to be established in na h-Eileanan Siar.

Question 16

To what extent do you support our proposal to require occupiers of non-domestic properties to provide information about unused heat on their premises?

- ☒ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

The disclosure of unused heat would inform planning and enable the co-location of waste heat and areas of heat demand.

Question 17

To what extent do you support our proposal to potentially require buildings with unused heat to provide this to a local heat network?

- ☒ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Question 18

We will need to have a way to monitor if people are meeting the Heat in Buildings Standard, and discussed two options for this. Which do you support?

- ☐ Submitting EPCs alone
- ☐ Sampling a percentage of buildings
- ☒ A combination of the two
- ☐ None, there should be no monitoring
- ☐ Another method, please suggest below or explain your selected answer

Question 19

We will need to have a way to enforce the Heat in Buildings Standard. We discussed possible options to help achieve compliance. What are your views on these ideas?

- ☐ I support relying on market and financial product mechanisms such as mortgages or home/ building insurance
- ☐ I support extra Council Tax and Non-domestic Rates charges, in future, for those who don't comply
- ☐ I support the introduction of civil penalties, in future, if compliance is not achieved
- ☐ I support a mixture of the above options
- ☒ I do not support any form of enforcement

Please explain your answer:

The Comhairle supports enabling people to meet the Heat in Buildings Standard through funding rather than disabling through enforcement. Significant investment would be required to enable homeowners to achieve compliance. . The proposals for enforcement have the potential to further penalise those who can least afford to meet the requirements and live in the poorest quality of housing. This will particularly impact those living in na h-Eileanan Siar, where fuel poverty and extreme poverty is the highest in Scotland and the energy efficiency of housing is significantly below the national average for Scotland. There is also concern around the psychological impact of enforcement on vulnerable groups.

Question 20

To what extent do you support our proposals to modify the Standard or exempt certain people from the need to meet the Heat in Buildings Standard?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☒ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose

☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

The Comhairle supports enabling people to meet the Heat in Buildings Standard through funding rather than disabling through exemption. Significant investment is required to enable those who cannot meet the Standard to improve energy efficiency of their homes. Support through additional funding would be preferable to exempting certain groups from meeting the Standard. Exempting these groups from the Standard risks these groups being left behind, exacerbating inequalities. All groups should have the same right to the aspirations of Housing to 2040 for everyone to have “a safe, high-quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be”.

Modifications to the standard may be beneficial if significant investment is provided to enable energy efficiency to be improved in buildings such as the traditionally constructed buildings prevalent in na h-Eileanan Siar, for which the proposed measures are not appropriate.

.....Free text box.

Question 21

Which people, businesses, or types of buildings, if any, should be eligible for a modified standard or exemptions?

Additional financial support should be available for those living in extreme fuel poverty and fuel poverty and for people living in homes with poor energy efficiency.

Building types such as traditionally constructed buildings such as Croft Houses found in na h-Eileanan Siar should also be offered additional financial support and modified standards should be considered to ensure energy efficiency can be improved in these buildings.

Island businesses which have higher costs should also be eligible for financial support.

Question 22

To what extent do you support our proposals to give certain people extra time to meet the Heat in Buildings Standard?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☐ Somewhat support
- ☒ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Significant investment to enable those who cannot meet the Standard to improve energy efficiency of their homes would be preferable to giving these groups extra time to meet the standard. Providing extra time to vulnerable groups risks these groups being left behind, exacerbating inequalities.

Question 23

Which people, businesses or types of buildings, if any, should be eligible for extra time?

Question 24

To what extent do you support our proposal to require all buildings owned by a Scottish public authority to be using clean heating systems by 2038?

- ☐ Strongly support
- ☒ Somewhat support
- ☐ Neither support nor oppose
- ☐ Somewhat oppose
- ☐ Strongly oppose
- ☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has set the target of Zero Direct Emissions Heating by 2038 however significant additional funding will be required to achieve this target.

Question 25

We are considering the following further duties on public sector organisations to support planning for the transition by 2038:

- ☐ Placing a new duty on public sector organisations which would, from 2025, prevent them from replacing a polluting heating system with another (unless impractical)
- ☐ Creating a new duty for each public body to develop and implement a plan to decarbonise their buildings
- ☐ Placing a new statutory reporting duty on public sector organisations to demonstrate progress towards their 2038 objective (with the potential for the 2038 then to be non-statutory); and/or
- ☒ Placing no further statutory requirements on public sector organisations (instead relying on their ability to plan alongside our delivery and funding programmes to meet the 2038 objective)

[Multiple choice boxes]

Please include any additional comments below.

.....Free text box.

Question 26

Do you agree with our proposals to include powers in the proposed Heat in Buildings Bill to change the current requirement in legislation for a narrowly-defined renewable heat target?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below

Question 27

Do you agree that the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021 should be amended in light of the passage of the Energy Act 2023?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

Please include any additional comments below

Question 28

Are there any further amendments to the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021 that the Scottish Government should consider?