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Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/02502/22

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

25 November 2022

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 1 November regarding Petition P-06-1314 calling for the introduction of grants to insulate all Welsh homes against both the heat and cold.

Whilst we recognise the need for all homes in Wales to have adequate insulation, Ministers have agreed to prioritise investment in social housing decarbonisation through the funding made available to social landlords through the Optimised Retrofit Programme (ORP) which prominently includes insulation as one of a suite of measures. We are starting in social housing, before moving to other tenures as this is where we have the most levers.

The ORP has already funded circa £60million in works and has committed a further £60million this year along with indicative amounts of £70million for each of next two years.

Channelling ORP investment through social landlords supports a 'test and learn' approach to how to decarbonise homes effectively and efficiently. As well as evaluating the technical and tenant aspects of the work, actual costs will be monitored and used in the assumptions of future models of residential decarbonisation which includes different types of insulation. This will provide the springboard to start the decarbonisation and insulation of homes in other tenures from 2023.

In Wales, we have a strong history of working in partnership with social landlords to provide high-quality homes for our most vulnerable households and communities. We are using those trusted relationships to ensure that, in a new and rapidly evolving market, we can assure ourselves of the quality and appropriateness of interventions. Working with the social housing sector first also helps support the growth of the skills base and offers opportunities to develop the secure materials and supply chains that are needed to decarbonise and insulate Welsh homes at scale and pace.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We are clear that in terms of retrofit, there are few simple solutions and indeed no one size fits all in terms of the housing stock here in Wales. Considering this, we are committed to getting as clear an understanding of the issues and committed to working with partners across the sector to ensure that our approach is evidence based and, while ambitious, also ultimately achievable.

We are gathering evidence and collecting baseline data from properties currently being retrofitted. This data will ensure we can measure the impact of our investment activities. Only through an evidence-based approach can we ensure that future investment relies on solutions that we can be confident work across different homes and different tenures.

Decarbonisation and insulation of privately owned homes, those in the privately rented and owner-occupied sectors is undoubtedly more complex, we know that innovative funding models will be needed to pay for the decarbonisation of these homes, the costs of which cannot rest fully on Welsh Government and that the UK Government as well as the private sector will need to contribute. However, we are confident that the learning from ORP, and other schemes, along with learning from the wider system (such as other government schemes), will put us in a strong position to start the work in other tenures.

Welsh Government NEST scheme also offers support, to qualify for a package of home energy improvements, the householder must meet qualifying criteria, which are set out in the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme Regulations. These include the requirements that they or someone they live with are in receipt of a qualifying means tested benefit (MTB); live in a privately owned or privately rented home; and live in an energy inefficient home (Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E, F, or G

We are continuing to invest in our Warm Homes Programme which has been in operation since 2010. This provides home energy efficiency measures including insulation recommended following a whole house assessment, which are designed to best meet the needs of the householder and the home.

The programme has benefitted more than 67,100 households since its launch with funding of between £5,000 and £12,000. Our programme is designed to provide support to lower income households experiencing difficulty maintaining a warm home at an affordable cost. The current programme runs until March 2023.

Yours sincerely,



Julie James AS/MS

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