Does Scotland have the right policies (Clean Air for Scotland Strategy), support and incentives in place to adequately tackle air pollution?

The current ErP labelling scheme and 2022 EU Ecodesign Ready directive, which introduces tough new emissions limits, including on those from wood burning stoves, will be impossible for many existing products to meet. In the UK stove industry there is already an acceptance of this and the development and testing of new emissions friendly product is well underway to replace non conforming and redundant product.

Wood burning stoves which are Ecodesign Ready produce 90% fewer emissions than burning wood in an open fire. We believe that promoting the replacement of open fires with Ecodesign Ready stoves could have a significant impact on emissions. It has been estimated that nearly 60% of all wood which is burnt is burned in open fires (DECC Domestic Wood Usage Survey, 1995) and much of this in urban Smoke Control Areas. We believe that local authorities should be given the resources to tackle this issue and bring the necessary prosecutions. At the moment people do it because they can clearly get away with it.

How does the Scottish policy fit with the UK and EU policy on air quality?

Ecodesign is the EU Directive designed to increase heating appliance efficiency and reduce emissions (PM, CO, CO2, NOx and OGC). It is due to come into force for room heating solid fuel appliances on 1 January 2022. DEFRA has gone on record to say that it will use Ecodesign to reduce emissions from solid fuel heating appliances.

The Stove Industry Alliance (SIA), of which Hi-Flame are founding members, has been working closely with DEFRA to introduce stoves that will meet the Ecodesign regulations ahead of the implementation date. The stoves are being called Ecodesign Ready.

They were officially launched on 28 February in Westminster at a reception hosted by Neil Parish MP, Chair of the Select Committee on Food and Rural Affairs. There are already over 200 models available and, importantly sales of these products are increasing and in the first two quarters of 2017 already accounted for approximately 14% of all sales. For the record many products produced in the last five years already meet the Ecodesign emissions criteria, but have yet to undergo the costly re-test.

The 200+ Ecodesign Ready stoves have been launched 5 years before the regulations become law. Furthermore, from 2020 manufacturers and distributors in the SIA have also committed to only manufacture new stove models that will satisfy Ecodesign.
Independent testing by Kiwa, the main UK test laboratory for solid fuel appliances, has shown that Ecodesign Ready stoves can reduce particulate emissions (PM) by 90% compared to an open fire and 80% compared to a stove manufactured ten years ago.

Modern clean burning stoves are designed to burn dry wood. Dry wood creates fewer emissions and produces more heat than wet wood. Typically much of the wood found in gabbage forecourts has a higher than recommended moisture content and it is this that is also exacerbating the emissions from inefficient open fires. DEFRA is again supporting the industry to create a new category of wood called Ready to Burn. This means the consumer will be able to buy a bag of logs branded Ready to Burn in the knowledge that the wood will give optimum performance and limit emissions from the stove.

**Are the policies sufficiently ambitious?**

An incentive scheme to encourage the replacement of open fires and older stoves with Ecodesign Ready stoves would accelerate the natural replacement process eg a reduction in VAT for replacements of old stoves or open fires. This could give a quick boost to air quality improvement at little actual cost to the taxpayer. A similar scheme was introduced in Norway.