

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Housing regarding the Scottish Emergency Heating Oil Scheme, 25 March 2026

Dear Convener,

I write to provide an update to the Committee following the Scottish Government's announcement on 17 March of a £10 million Scottish Emergency Heating Oil Scheme (SEHOS) to support lower income households struggling with recent price rises for heating oil and Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG).

The sudden rise in prices due to global events has come as a shock to many people, particularly in rural and island areas. On 16 March, the UK Government announced a £53 million fund to support households who use heating oil and LPG, of which only £4.6 million has been allocated to Scotland. As already confirmed to Parliament, Scottish Government do not consider that this is sufficient and will invest a further £5.4 million in order to provide meaningful support to users who have been impacted.

The scheme will be delivered through Advice Direct Scotland (ADS). The Scottish Government has been engaging intensively with ADS and fuel poverty stakeholders, as well as industry via the UK and Ireland Fuel Distribution Association, and I am pleased to confirm that households will be able to apply to ADS for support with their heating oil and LPG bills from the scheme's launch on 1 April.

The scheme will provide a payment of £300, paid directly to suppliers where possible, to help qualifying households to place an order.

The scheme is envisaged to run for up to six months with two opportunities to apply during that period. It will focus on low-income households, including those on means-tested social security, but will also be open to applications from other people on who have unavoidable additional heating needs, such as people with disabilities, or who are at risk of self-rationing fuel.

I would encourage households to engage with ADS via their website and helpline to access this support from 1 April. Information will be available there as soon as possible. ADS will continue, ahead of this scheme opening, to provide vital energy advice and assistance to concerned consumers

Yours sincerely,

Màiri McAllan
Cabinet Secretary for Housing