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Social Justice and Social Security Committee

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11 November 2025

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your letter of 14 October 2025 on behalf of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee which seeks an update on progress towards our statutory fuel poverty targets. I am responding as Cabinet Secretary with portfolio responsibility for fuel poverty - however the link between both portfolios is clear and we continue to work collaboratively to progress our climate and fuel poverty ambitions.

Progress towards our ambitious fuel poverty targets, as set in The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019, is measured as part of our long-standing national Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS). The SHCS provides a snapshot of the Scottish housing stock in each survey year, including fuel poverty rates, with the most recent survey estimating that 861,000 households (34% of all households) were in fuel poverty in 2023, of which 491,000 (19.4% of all households) were in extreme fuel poverty.

The next SHCS findings for 2024 will be published early 2026 and will include local authority estimates of fuel poverty based on a three-year average for 2022 to 2024. Meanwhile, we continue to undertake scenario modelling on the impact of the energy price cap on fuel poverty rates for the typical dual fuel household paying by direct debit.

Based on Ofgem's [announcement on 27th of August 2025](#), Scottish Government's [published scenario modelling](#) suggests that during October to December 2025 there will be around 830,000 fuel poor households in Scotland – 33% of all households. This is an increase of 10,000 households from estimates for July to September 2025.

We continue to progress actions within our devolved powers towards raising household incomes and improving the energy efficiency of our homes, however it is clear that the fundamental fiscal and policy levers to make a real difference lie with the UK Government. This is further emphasised by published Scottish Government modelling estimates that if energy prices returned to 2019 levels, then there would be 389,000 fewer households in fuel poverty in Scotland in 2023, with a fuel poverty rate of 19 per cent, representing 472,000 households.

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It is essential that the UK Government takes urgent action to address the high energy bills faced by the people of Scotland – in an energy rich country like Scotland, people should not be struggling to pay their bills. In particular, the UK Government must urgently deliver a social tariff in the form of an automatic and targeted discount on energy bills to address unaffordable bills at source.

I trust that the Committee finds this letter helpful.

Yours sincerely,

MÀIRI MCALLAN

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