



Decarbonisation of housing association homes



Briefing for external stakeholders
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**NATIONAL
HOUSING
FEDERATION**



Summary

England's homes produce more carbon emissions every year than is produced by all the country's cars. To reach the national net zero targets by 2050, we must decarbonise all homes in England, including the 2.7 million homes owned by housing associations.

The National Housing Federation (NHF) has launched two new pieces of work to help housing associations achieve this aim – new analysis carried out by Savills of the cost of making the sector's homes zero carbon, and a guide for housing associations to support their journey to sustainable housing. This briefing provides an overview of both papers and a summary of the partnerships we want to build to make these ambitions a reality.

Key Points

- On average, housing association homes are already more energy efficient than any other homes but the sector is still poised to lead the way and drive even greater improvements.
- The sector plans to invest £70bn by 2050 in improving existing homes but recent analysis by Savills finds it will cost at least an additional £36bn to reach zero carbon emissions.
- Housing associations want to work in partnership with the government, industry, society and residents to achieve full decarbonisation.
- **Housing associations need the government to bring forward guidance and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to help them on their journey.**



Reaching net zero – the sector's commitment

Housing associations have invested in energy efficiency and new heating technology for many years and their homes are on average more energy efficient than any other homes. By 2050 the sector plans to invest £70bn in the fabric, heating systems and components of their existing homes.

Housing associations are uniquely placed to make a central contribution to reaching the country's carbon reduction goal – they are secure, strongly regulated, not for profit organisations with a deep commitment to the long term sustainability of their homes and communities.

Crucially, the housing association sector also believes that the climate transition must be a just transition and that residents must be at the heart of this work. Decarbonising social homes must improve comfort for residents, tackle fuel poverty, and make heating bills more affordable.



Our journey to zero emissions

In our new guide for housing associations, the NHF sets out the steps the sector will be taking to reach zero carbon emissions. While the journey to decarbonisation is far from simple, the main interventions are in two key areas:

1. Fabric improvements

Fabric improvements like better insulation or improving windows will be needed in many homes to keep fuel costs down and to enable clean heat technology to adequately heat the home. Making fabric improvements now brings immediate benefits – lower bills and improved comfort for residents, and lower emissions – so this investment should be front-loaded and prioritised over the next decade.

2. Clean heat

Decarbonising social housing will also require replacing fossil fuel powered heating systems with electric heat pumps or other forms of decarbonised heating. The switch to decarbonised heating should begin as soon as possible but to a slower timetable with the majority of the investment in the 2030s.



Partnership working

Housing associations are eager to drive decarbonisation of homes but they cannot do it alone. They must work with residents, the government, industry and society. [Analysis from Savills](#) estimates that decarbonising all existing housing association homes will require at least an additional £36bn of investment on top of the £70bn housing associations already have planned by 2050. Housing associations will not be able to meet this additional cost alone. The sector needs to work closely with the government and industry on how to design, fund and deliver these works over the next three decades.

In the short term, we are calling on the government to:

- Bring forward the full £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund committed in the Conservative manifesto and make it available to housing associations to bid directly and for long term bids.
- Reform the key measures of energy performance in buildings – Standard Energy Procedure (SAP) and Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) – so they support the decarbonisation of existing homes.
- Reform electricity pricing so that residents’ fuel bills remain affordable when they switch to forms of electric heating.
- Address the barriers in the planning system to decarbonising existing homes.
- Put in place strategic support and investment in the skills and supply chains needed to deliver zero emissions across all homes.

For more information about the NHF’s work on sustainability, please visit our website or contact Sarauniya Shehu by emailing sarauniya.shehu@housing.org.uk or calling 0207 067 1044.