



Minutes of the 486th Meeting
of the Northern Ireland Housing Council held on
Thursday 9th December 2021 at 10.00 am via Zoom

Present:

Anne-Marie Fitzgerald	Fermanagh & Omagh District (Chair)
Mark Cooper	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough (Vice Chair)
John Finlay	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough
Nick Mathison	Ards & North Down Borough
Jim Speers	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough
Michelle Kelly	Belfast City
Allan Bresland	Derry City & Strabane District
Amanda Grehan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City
Tommy Nicholl	Mid & East Antrim Borough
Mickey Ruane	Newry, Mourne & Down District

In Attendance:

Paul Price	Department for Communities
Kieran Devlin	Department for Communities
Grainia Long	Chief Executive, Housing Executive
Siobhan McCauley	Director of Regional Services, Housing Executive
Robert Clements	Sustainable Development Manager, Housing Executive
Kelly Cameron	Secretary (Housing Executive Secretariat)

Apologies:

Catherine Elattar	Mid Ulster Borough
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1.0	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Paul Price and Kieran Devlin from the Department for Communities and Grainia Long, Siobhan McCauley and Robert Clements from the Housing Executive.</p>	
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2.0	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>None.</p>	
3.0	<p><u>To adopt the Minutes of the 485th Housing Council Meeting held on Thursday, 11th November 2021</u></p> <p>It was proposed by Alderman J Speers, seconded by Alderman A Grehan and resolved, that the Minutes of the 485th Meeting of the Housing Council held on Thursday 11th November 2021 be approved and signed by the Chair.</p>	
4.0 4.1 4.2	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p><u>Housing Association Key Staff Contacts</u></p> <p>It was noted that Members had requested Housing Associations staff key contacts from Ben Collins NIFHA, the information was still awaited.</p> <p><u>Members Queries</u></p> <p>Members had received responses to their queries, as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Anne-Marie Fitzgerald – Housing Executive Policy on pets permitted in properties (Circulated for Information) 	Secretary
5.0	<p><u>Forward Workplan</u></p> <p>The Paper was noted.</p>	Secretary

<p>6.0</p>	<p><u>Department for Communities – Housing Top Issues</u></p> <p>Mr Paul Price and Mr Kieran Devlin gave an update of changes under the specific headings on the Department for Communities (DfC) Housing Issues:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Newbuild starts <p>Referring to the 10% wheelchair access in the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP). Alderman Grehan was keen that family homes for those with children who have disabilities should be built. Siobhan McCauley undertook to provide a breakdown of how many family homes, apartments etc.” have been built with wheelchair access in social homes over the last 4/5 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-Ownership • Programme for Social Reform • Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations Policy <p>Paul Price confirmed that the 18 out of the 20 proposals in the Review does not require legislation. The Minister has approved the changes to the scheme and waiting implementation. He added that the resources to implement and deliver the proposed changes is the challenge.</p> <p>The Housing Council are keen to see the implementation of the proposals being taken forward by the end of March 2022.</p> <p>Councillor Cooper asked in relation to ‘right-sizing’ transfers would that be incorporated into the housing selection points system. It was confirmed that this will be part of the current ‘shared equity homes’ there is no direct relation to the points system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclassification of Northern Ireland Social Housing Providers • Supporting People Delivery Strategy • Homelessness Strategy • Regulation of the Private Rented Sector <p>Members welcomed the work in some areas to improve the private rented sector and reiterated the conditions and unfit standards which their tenants, who possibly are the most vulnerable in society are subjected to.</p>	<p>S McCauley</p>
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	<p>Members also welcomed the range of proposed enhanced powers to councils in relation to private landlords and their properties.</p> <p>Reference was made by way of supporting landlords in relation the 'notice period for tenants', who may have built up a substantial amount of arrears, it was explained that to date there has no changes to this set up, it would be an issue for the landlord and tenant to resolve.</p> <p>Members asked was resources going to be made available to private landlords in order to support them to bring their properties up to standards, funding similar to that of Housing Executive and Housing Associations.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the private rented sector is approximately 17% of the social housing market, but there is no discussions for an intervention to provide government funding to enable these properties to be brought up to standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing Housing Supply• Affordable Warmth Scheme <p>Referring to the budget of approximately £18m for 2021/22, it was confirmed that the spent to date was approximately £7.2 m. It was explained that due to several factors impacting the works being carried out, in particular the increase of cost of materials, the Housing Executive Board has approved a 12% increase and 2,000 re-approvals and re-issued. The other issue is access to properties and staff shortages due to Covid.</p> <p>It was noted that Housing Executive and Council staff are working hard to get as much of the work carried out within this financial year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NIHE Rent Increase• ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014 -2020• Housing Executive historical debt and exclusion from having to pay Corporation Tax• Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes Framework• Long term rent trajectory• Affordability of social rents <p>Mr Devlin undertook to share the links to the Notice to Quit and Housing Supply Strategy Consultations and added that Members feedback on the Consultations would be much appreciated.</p>	<p>K Devlin All Members</p>
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<p>7.0</p>	<p>Reducing the impacts of Climate Change</p> <p>Robert Clements, Sustainable Development Manager gave Members an update on how the Housing Executive aims to participate in Reducing the impacts of Climate Change (Copies of the Slides are appended to these Minutes – Appendix A).</p> <p>Members welcomed the work the Housing Executive is carrying out and recognise that this is a massive challenge and the need for action is urgent.</p> <p>Councillor Mathison highlighted the Housing Executive’s ambition in dealing with how heat is generated in Housing Executive stock and 2025 getting heat pumps installed and the retrofit programme for those properties of the gas grid and move towards possibly the hydrogen technologies. He added how far are those options are developed.</p> <p>Robert Clements explained that from the Housing Executive perspective, both as Strategic Housing Authority and NI’s largest landlord, we indicated in our corporate response to the DfE Energy Strategy Policy Options paper an ambition to electrify heating for householders, with a focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. ‘off the gas grid’ initially through hybrid heating systems (oil/gas with heat pumps) by 2025 and then standalone air source heat pumps by 2030, with improved energy efficiency, better electric tariff options and improved householder education.b. on the gas grid’ we aspire for green hydrogen to replace natural gas, however we stated if this wasn’t an affordable option by 2030 (NIHE will have to revisit this date as the BEIS Heat & Buildings Strategy, Oct 2021 notes a decision point on hydrogen for heating should be made in 2026) we would move to electrify heating ‘on the gas grid’. <p>All this is based on suitable funding and satisfactory outcomes from pilots and programmes.</p> <p>Going forward, the Housing Executive wants to support choice where possible, and will not prioritise fossil fuels in the medium to long term.</p>	
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	<p>Whilst acknowledging technology is evolving the Housing Executive believe decarbonisation choice is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. affordability,b. carbon free,c. sustainability of supply. <p>Members recognised the major challenge is the funding these programmes and the concern are there firms who are equipped to carry out such works.</p> <p>Councillor Cooper referred to the problem of cavity wall insulation with Housing Executive stock and there was a commitment reported in September to Members, that there will be a major CWI replacement programme, as part of the energy efficiency strategy, he added the concern is when funding permits, he felt that all energy efficiency programme could be put in place, but if the stock are not properly insulated, it is a waste of resources. A joint-up approach and investment is required to tackle these issues.</p> <p>Grainia Long confirmed that the Housing Executive Board approved a Cavity Wall Insulation plan which is part funded and she added that it is vital that the right sequence of works to homes is carried out.</p> <p>It was noted that there are several programmes to enable the Housing Executive to seek funding ie. Affordable Warmth scheme, European Regional Development Funding (EDRF) etc. It was recognised that this is a wider investment challenge as part of the Housing Executive's Revitalisation programme.</p> <p>The Chief Executive undertook to provide a Presentation on the Cavity Wall Insulation Action Plan.</p> <p>Members would be keen to see at firsthand some of the Housing Executive's pilot projects illustrating Hybrid heat pumps and electric generation and storage. The Secretary undertook to arrange visits in Spring 2022.</p>	<p>G Long</p>
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<p>8.0</p>	<p>Housing Policy in NI Conference ‘Minister & Housing Executive Keynotes – 7th February 2022.</p> <p>Agreed: Alderman Tommy Nicholl and Councillor Mark Cooper would represent the Housing Council at this Seminar.</p> <p>The Chair would advise the Secretary if she is able to attend nearer the time.</p>	<p>Secretary Chair</p>
<p>9.0</p>	<p><u>Housing Executive’s Scheme Starts December 2021</u></p> <p>Members noted the report.</p>	
<p>10.0 10.1</p>	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p><u>Appointed Consultants</u></p> <p>Alderman Speers referred to a property in Hamiltonsbawn where the Contractor was removing the guttering etc and discovered asbestos. Works had to be stopped and with the bad weather the water damaged the property. He sought clarification as to why the Consultant had not identified this issue, if he had have completed a thorough research/investigation of the property, prior to works commencing.</p>	<p>S McC</p>
<p>11.0</p>	<p><u>Date and Venue of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>It was agreed that at the Meeting scheduled for Thursday, 13th January at 10 am via Zoom.</p> <p>The Chair wished Members and Officers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.</p>	<p>Secretary</p>

The Meeting concluded at 12.15 am.

Appendix A



Reducing the impacts of climate change Housing Council

9 Dec 2021

Robert Clements
Sustainable Development Manager
Northern Ireland Housing Executive

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2021- a tipping point?



This is a one in 20-year flood event that we are having now for the fifth time in the last two decades



Code Red for Humanity
'unless there are immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to close to 1.5°C or even 2°C will be beyond reach'

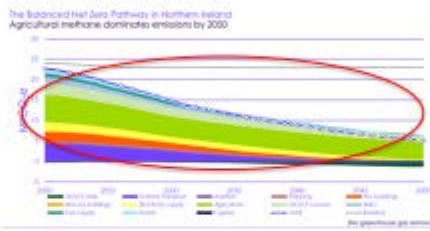
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The Context.....Local Picture



Climate change: Ireland getting warmer and wetter
Ireland is getting warmer and wetter due to climate change, according to a major report published on ...
BBC - 5d

The Context.....Local Picture



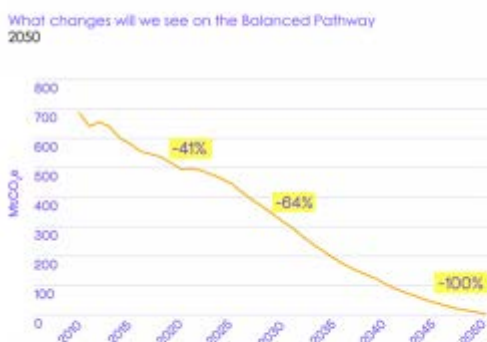
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BBC - 5d



UK Policy Context & Guidance



Duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that the **net** UK carbon account for the year 2050 is **at least 100% lower** than the 1990 baseline



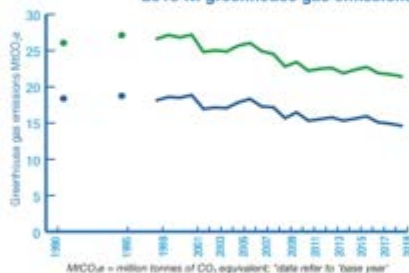
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NI Green House Gases Statistics 1990 - 2019



NI Greenhouse Gas Statistics 1990-2019

2019 NI greenhouse gas emissions have decreased by 18% since 1990*



NI Housing reduce CO₂ by **29%** from 1990s to 2016 (NIHCS)



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Climate Challenge in NI

30 YEARS TO ACHIEVE 20% CARBON REDUCTION – **NEXT 29 YEARS TO ACHIEVE 80% CARBON REDUCTION**



CHALLENGE SIMILAR TO UNFITNESS UPGRADES FROM 1970's

All sectors need to spend £1.5Billion per annum for next 20 years
Overall £6-9 Billion Housing Upgrades across NI



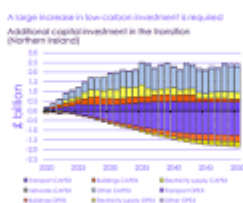
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Step Change Now

CCC 6th Carbon Budget

Net Zero for ALL sectors needs 60% carbon reduction over next 15 years

By 2030 NI annual cost of carbon mitigation is **£1.5Bn per year...achieve savings by 2040's!**



Research into the Future of Energy Efficiency Policy in Northern Ireland



To meet 2050 net zero commitments, it is estimated that policies would need to **drive...retrofits for over 50,000 buildings within the decade**. Current energy efficiency schemes in NI deliver.. **16,500 buildings per year, indicating that a doubling or trebling is needed....Overall £6-9 Billion Housing Upgrades across NI**

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A busy policy and strategy landscape



NI Energy Strategy



NI Climate Change Bill



NI Green Growth



Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-2024



Economic Recovery Action Plan



NI Building Regs

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Northern Ireland Housing Context



Carbon Emissions - 2018



Energy Consumption - 2017



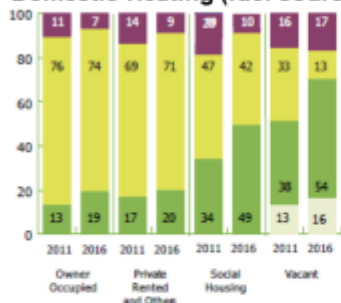
Northern Ireland had the highest weekly household expenditure on energy of any UK region, it was some 14.7% higher in the period 2016-2019 than the UK average

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Northern Ireland Housing



Domestic Heating (fuel sources)



- 68% Oil
- 25% N/Gas



Home temperature loss after 5 hours

With a temperature of 20°C inside and 0°C outside



NI highest weekly household expenditure on energy of any UK region – 14.7% higher 2016-2019 than UK average (36% 2012-14)

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Climate Change influence ALL areas of business



Housing Executive

86,000 houses
40+ Offices
3,200 staff



ne Planet

10 Key Solutions Needed to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

1. PHASE OUT coal plants
2. INVEST in clean energy & efficiency
3. RETROFIT buildings
4. DECARBONIZE cement, steel & plastics
5. SHIFT to electric vehicles
6. INCREASE public transport
7. DECARBONIZE aviation and shipping
8. HALT deforestation & RESTORE degraded lands
9. REDUCE food loss and waste
10. EAT more plants & less meat

Source: WRI

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

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HECA Role

Home Energy Conservation Act (1995) Housing Executive statutory role



3 Themes to deliver HECA role

- **REPORT** annually energy efficiency across all residential tenures
- **SUPPORT** Practical, cost effective, significant improvement (VFM), innovation
- **PROMOTE** energy efficiency awareness across all tenures



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Investment to transition to net zero



1. Housing Executive aims to deliver **£200m+ investment in our homes – and £162m in provision of new social housing** in this year
2. How do we ensure this has maximum impact?
 - a. Make energy efficiency an infrastructure/strategic priority to **reduce energy demand & deliver a step change of energy efficiency retrofitting.**
 - b. **Transition to low and zero carbon heating** systems within new build and retrofit (on/off gas grid networks);
 - c. Greater societal change via the **promotion of education and empowerment** for householders to deliver behaviour change needed to understand new technology and systems.

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Some of the Challenges we need to solve



- a. Condition and functionality of **existing stock** and investment requirement
- b. NI has a **long-term dependence on carbon** and imported energy- oil boilers!!!
- c. e. **Fuel poverty is still relatively high** across Northern Ireland.
- d. Energy and climate policy in NI is **devolved into two separate government departments – economic and climate strategy alignment**
- e. Building Regulation policy in NI...**much more to do!**
- f. There is a **challenge of funding retrofitting- who pays and how?**
- g. **Lack of experience and capacity gaps** in local energy and construction sector, a skills shortage, as demonstrated in the NIHE ERDF project.

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Retrofit at scale



- Northern Ireland Housing Executive and ERDF funded retrofit Programme - up to 2000 homes and E45m investment
- **First retrofit, at scale** of its kind in Northern Ireland
- An opportunity to test, innovate, build public trust
- Pilot **PAS 2030 and Retrofit Coordinators**



As a consequence of the recent ERDF retrofit Programme,

- a. **Skills of both consultants and the supply chain** including contractors have increased significantly in this new market.
- b. Housing Executive has developed an **ARTES Initiative** which is their contribution towards **increasing trade skills and social value benefits** within our communities from its long term Maintenance Contracts.
- c. Aim to **use the local construction industry** to generate and mobilise local knowledge, where possible.

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Pilot Projects

AIM: Technology work around tenant, NOT tenant work around technology



- 6 Houses in Fermanagh**
- Hybrid heat pumps, electric generation and storage
 - Thermal improvement SAP Band C
 - Fitted Winter 2020



RULET

- 10 Houses in Omagh**
- Hybrid heat pumps with gas & oil
 - Heat pumps and storage
 - AGILE & Time of Use tariffs
 - Thermal improvement SAP Band C
 - Fit Autumn 2021



Outputs: Low Energy Bills, Low Carbon Heating, Improved Thermal Comfort

Look Forward to 200+ unit pilot for Winter 2022

Collaboration is the key to Success



The Housing Executive social housing new build ambitions:



NIHE New Build Pilot.

The Housing Executive is undertaking the construction of a small development of new social housing units through a research pilot scheme in North Belfast. This scheme will provide 6 no. semi-detached dwellings (2 bed, 3 person) and will incorporate the following:-

- **Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)**
- **Ultra-low energy** building techniques
- Mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system with integral heat pump.

New Build Scheme Objectives.

- **Demonstrate an exemplar social housing model**
- To independently assess modern methods of construction for:
 - Speed**
 - Fabric performance**
 - Value for money**
- **Reduce fuel poverty**
- Inform future policy

Embodied energy can also be reduced by using low-carbon building materials and construction methods. These standards far exceed the current Building Regulations Building low energy housing now would futureproof our new build stock, as there would be no need to return to retrofit to a higher standard to meet UK targets.

Our Vision...

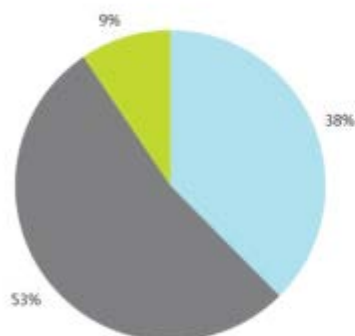


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Technology can't do everything



Role of societal and behavioural changes



- Low-carbon technologies or fuels not societal / behavioural changes
- Measures with a combination of low-carbon technologies and societal / behavioural changes
- Largely societal or behavioural changes

Source: CCC analysis

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Education and Empowerment



1. Local Offices Energy Awareness and Carbon Literacy training for staff and community groups - Green Champions
2. HOMEADVICE (*evolution of the previous HEATSMART service*):
3. Tenants with persistent heating issues and modern heating controls
4. Electronic Vehicle Charging Points – need govt policy direction
5. Rewilding in collaboration with Community Groups



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30 Years to meet Net Zero WE CAN DO IT



~1.2 million BEVs/year
(136 per hour)
(current 331 vehicles/hour)



~600k installations/year
(68 per hour)
(current 182 boilers/hour)

2025 – Fit Hybrid Heat Pumps off gas grid with deep retrofit – Our ambition

2030 – Fit Heat Pumps off the gas grid and hydrogen boilers on the gas grid – both with deep retrofit – Our Ambition

2030 – No new cars use fossil fuels – National Policy

2035 – No new hybrid cars, electric only – National Policy

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The Future.....



- **energy efficiency** (cavity wall and loft insulation, passive fitted windows and air tightness measures)
- **low carbon heating** (heat pumps and hydrogen ready boilers and bigger radiators, still with a wet system)
- **electric tariff change** (offer householders 'time of use' tariffs')
- **better householder education** (provide more interactive solutions, apps on mobile phones and home energy display devices)
- **more renewable technology** (solar PV on roofs, electric and thermal storage batteries)

- Reduced bills
- Reduced carbon emissions
- Healthier Homes – greater thermal comfort
- **Building communities not just houses**

'We can't afford not to do this....'

