

I attended the Scotland's Energy Future, Community Engagement Event, in Dumfries Easterbrook Hall, on the 8th November 2017.

A point arising from the event was the importance of space heating as a component of energy use and the possibility of addressing this problem by raising the insulation standards in housing stock.

New build offers great opportunities, which are currently, as far as I can judge, under-exploited. My contribution to this discussion at the debate was to suggest that prefabrication can achieve very high standards of finish and has the potential, if adopted as the required standard for the provision of social housing, to deliver high grade housing, competitively priced and built to the highest environmental standards and designs.

The real challenge though, is how to upgrade older housing. The following suggestion summarises an approach to this problem which occurred to me following the event.

The basis of this proposal is that no house which falls below a grade A EPC should be traded on the open market. An option for a house falling below this standard, would be: independent valuation and sale to the government.

The government would then contract out the upgrading of the purchased housing using accredited businesses to carry out the work. Upgrade would be based on designs, strategies and materials developed specifically for the purpose.

This would hopefully lead to efficiencies and economies in the process which would enable a radical upgrade of empty houses, before once again placing them on the open market.

A proportion of the housing stock thus upgraded could be retained by the government for social housing.

Of course all householders would be at liberty to invest in their own house in an attempt to improve their EPC Grade and thus access the option of trading it on the open market.

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