

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF ROOFING CONTRACTORS

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Low Carbon Scotland: Meeting our Emissions Reduction Targets

2013 - 2027

The NFRC has considerable concern regarding the condition of Scotland's buildings as highlighted in recent Scottish Housing Condition Surveys. The NFRC believes that buildings need to be wind and watertight to be carbon efficient.

Carbon Efficiency of Building Stock

Residential sector - 85% will still be in use by 2050 Climate Change (Scotland) Act has specified an 80% reduction in carbon emissions.

The Scottish Government's consultation "Homes that don't cost the earth" identifies a "Looking after your home - a hierarchy of needs" and the two first steps of this six step hierarchy state:

1. Make sure that your home is wind and watertight and that it is structurally sound; make sure that it stays that way by carrying out regular maintenance.
2. Make sure that work is done properly because poor quality repairs may be ineffective and can cost more in the long run."

The Confidential Reporting on Structural Safety for Scottish Buildings report stated "When damage does occur to the envelope of a building, the energy performance of the building may be reduced, but opportunities could be taken with repair and maintenance programmes to install energy improving measures."

The Historic Scotland Traditional Building Skills Strategy stated "A well maintenance building is one which is more energy efficient" and "The adaptation of Scotland's existing building stock and ongoing maintenance over wholesale replacement are critically important to achieving our low carbon objective" and "The focus of any action to reduce carbon emissions in Scotland therefore must focus heavily on the domestic stock."

Therefore, the condition of buildings is essential to the low carbon agenda.

Condition of Scotland's Dwellings

The *Scottish Housing Condition Survey 2011* which states:

"Older dwellings are more likely to have some form of disrepair with 92% of those built before 1919." Compared with just one year earlier *Scottish Housing Condition Survey 2010* of pre 1919 dwellings with 90% having disrepair and *Scottish Housing Condition Survey 2007* stating 92%.

Three quarters of dwellings with disrepair have some disrepair to critical elements which is central to the dwelling being wind and weatherproof.

The *Scottish Small Towns Report* stated that “every town surveyed had instance of serious disrepair.” The survey results suggested that some towns had a higher incidence of disrepair where in excess of 80% of the properties surveyed required some form of maintenance. The towns surveyed which fared better still required between 50% and 75% requiring maintenance.

The report suggested that approximately 70% of the properties surveyed would benefit from or will be required to have works carried out to remove serious defects.

A further analysis of the data showed that in those properties surveyed 38.65% had roof defects and 45.39% had loss or falling masonry. Both these issues would be surveyed as part of the scheme.

Scottish Small Towns Report stated “the costing profiles cover essential repair and maintenance works separately from those to reflect works to deal with the effects of dry rot or other destructive defects. Refurbishment works and works to building services (electricity, gas, water and drainage) have been separately included in assessing the potential grant demand of £122.89M for circa 21,000 domestic properties and 4,200 non-domestic properties.”

This shows that the condition of properties is not improving in Scotland which in turn will affect their energy efficiency despite research showing that between 2008 and 2010 that £2088 million was spent on property privately owned.

HOMES FOR SCOTLAND'S PEOPLE: A Scottish Housing Policy Statement
A Scottish Government policy statement - “Improving the physical quality of our housing is one of our key priorities. We are clear that housing quality should be a right not an aspiration for tenants. Good housing quality goes straight to the heart of improving the quality of life and is central in supporting our policies for health, regeneration and economic growth.”
“We face a range of challenges due to past shortcomings in the quality, design and maintenance of housing and neighbourhoods.”

“The biggest change in Scottish housing in recent decades has been the growth of the private sector. Owner occupation is now the largest tenure - alongside private rented housing, it amounts to over 70% of Scottish housing. The need for action on quality within the private sector was demonstrated by the 2002 Scottish House Condition Survey. 27% of owner-occupied houses and 40% of flats had at least one element in a state of urgent disrepair. Conditions tend to be worse in the private rented sector and in older properties, where about half of properties require some urgent repair.”
“Disrepair and lack of maintenance affects not only owners and occupants, but also neighbours and the wider community. It is essential that the issue should be tackled. The prime responsibility lies with the owners but these matters are also the proper concern of government”

1. Energy Efficiency and historic buildings. Activities within the energy efficiency area of work will be presented with a special emphasis on projects funded by the Climate Challenge Fund.

As previously stated, The Scottish Government's consultation "Homes that don't cost the earth" identifies a "Looking after your home - a hierarchy of needs" and the two first steps of this hierarchy state:

"1. Make sure that your home is wind and watertight and that it is structurally sound; make sure that it stays that way by carrying out regular maintenance.

2. Make sure that work is done properly because poor quality repairs may be ineffective and can cost more in the long run."; and the Scottish Housing Condition Survey 2011 identifies that the poor condition of Scotland's traditional buildings despite property owners spending significant funds on them.

Skills Issues

The *Historic Scotland "Traditional Building Skills"* report states: "our strategy of investment and support will be focused on the following activities:"

"supporting the construction sector and the public by promoting a better understanding of the value of traditional building skills and their relevance to our current building stock;"

"better understanding of and capability to demonstrate the relevance of traditional skills to our current building stock in terms of energy efficiency, sustainability and conservation gain."

The report also states:

"Recent projects and reports produced for Historic Scotland have shown there is a growing demand for traditional building skills to support our built heritage. They also reveal that the traditional building skills we need to service the repair and maintenance sector (which amounts to 35% of the Construction sector overall), are often not readily available, with a lack of formal vocational training and qualifications."

"Trades-people and some of those teaching across Scotland have gaps in the knowledge and skills they need to repair and maintain traditionally constructed buildings. There are often no options within the qualifications framework to pursue traditional skills."

"An ongoing issue is the lack of understanding of the relevance of traditional building skills and the benefits they offer, both within industry and public perception."

Linda Fabiani MSP (then Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture) stated: "The knowledge, skills and materials required to conserve, maintain and repair traditional buildings has been in decline for some time so we need to focus on raising knowledge and skill levels."

The *National Heritage Training Group's 2007 reported Skills Needs Analysis of The Built Heritage Sector in Scotland* which stated in its conclusion that "A great need exists to re-establish a base-line of general knowledge and understanding of conservation and restoration across all participants, from craft, management to professional level in the conservation, repair, maintenance and improvement sector."

The National Federation of Roofing Contractors Limited (NFRC) is the UK's largest roofing trade association, representing over 70% of the roofing industry by value. With a history spanning almost 120 years, NFRC has established itself as the voice of the roofing industry, constantly adapting to change and innovation to ensure its members are at the forefront.

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