

The Warmer Homes Scheme – tackling energy poverty in Ireland

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Mechanisms, schemes and tools in place

- Energy cost-related supports
 - *National Fuel Allowance Scheme, Housing Benefit Package*
- Energy efficiency upgrade schemes
 - *Warmer Homes Scheme*
 - *Others such as Warmth & Wellbeing, Better Energy Communities, Deep Retrofit*
- Other government assistance schemes
 - *Housing Aid for Older People, Local Authority improvement loans & investment*
- Supplier obligations and regulator-enforced responsibilities
 - *Energy Suppliers Handbook, Energy Engage Code, Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme (EEOS)*

The Warmer Homes Scheme

- Nationwide scheme running since 2001 administered by SEAI on behalf of DCCAE
- Delivering free energy upgrades to homeowners in receipt of certain benefits
- 140,000 homes have received works since it started
- Up until 2018, mainly focused on ‘shallow’ upgrades but expanded measures this year
- 5500 homes completed in 2018
- Annual budget for 2019 of €24m



Warmer Homes eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the Warmer Homes Scheme, applicants must:

- Own and live in a property that was built and occupied before 2006
- Be in receipt of one of the following:
 - Fuel Allowance
 - One parent family payment
 - Family income supplement
 - Domiciliary care allowance
 - Jobseekers allowance for over 6 months and have a child under 7
 - Carers Allowance and lives with the person they are caring for
- Not have received works previously under the scheme



Energy efficiency measures delivered

- Attic insulation
- Cavity wall insulation
- External wall insulation
- Internal wall insulation
- Draught proofing
- Lagging jackets
- CFLs
- Window replacements and/or heating upgrades, in high priority circumstances



Resource structure on Warmer Homes

Managing Agent

- Surveys
- Inspections
- BERs
- Technical support

SEAI

Team of 3

Customer Service

- Applications
- Queries
- Complaints
- Customer Support

Warmer Homes contractor panel

- 39 contractors working off 3-year contracts with SEAI
- Mix of private contractors and community based organisation
- Selected based on their experience delivering upgrades to occupied homes

The end to end process - overview

1. APPLICATION STAGE

- Homeowner sends application to SEAI
- SEAI carries out all eligibility checks and reviews the information provided
- SEAI notifies homeowner when checks complete and what happens next

4-6 mths

2. SURVEY STAGE

- If eligible, survey team calls homeowner to get some further details on property
- SEAI surveyor gets in touch with homeowner to arrange visit to assess property
- SEAI surveyor carries out an assessment to check suitability of property for upgrade
- If suitable, surveyor recommends works and explains recommendations to homeowner

4-10 weeks

3. DELIVERY STAGE

- Contractor is assigned to carry out works and gets in touch to arrange a visit
- Contractor carries out assessment to gather details and plan works
- Contractor carries out the recommended works suitable for that property
- Contractor completes works and provides homeowner with documentation

1-2 mths

4. FOLLOW UP STAGE

- Assessment team carries out a BER after works done
- SEAI inspectors check the quality of the work carried out
- If any snags are identified, contractor returns to address

Quality and standards

- Clear standards and requirements to be met for all measures delivered
- Key document: *SR54: Code of Practice for the energy efficient retrofit of dwellings*
- SEAI technical specification, code of practice, operational requirements
- Relevant regulations, standards and manufacturer guidelines
- 20% inspection rate on ‘shallow homes’ (currently 100% on ‘deeper homes’)
- SEAI’s Quality Assurance Disciplinary Procedure



Vulnerable homeowners and communication

- Different approach required – not just normal energy efficiency works
- Intention is to make things better, don't want to make things worse in the process
- Keeping homeowner at forefront of the process:
 - On-hand support with application
 - Greater communication upfront
 - Greater time spent on visits
 - Speaking in the homeowner's language
 - Sensitivity and understanding of contractors
 - Learning from the experts, eg Health Exec

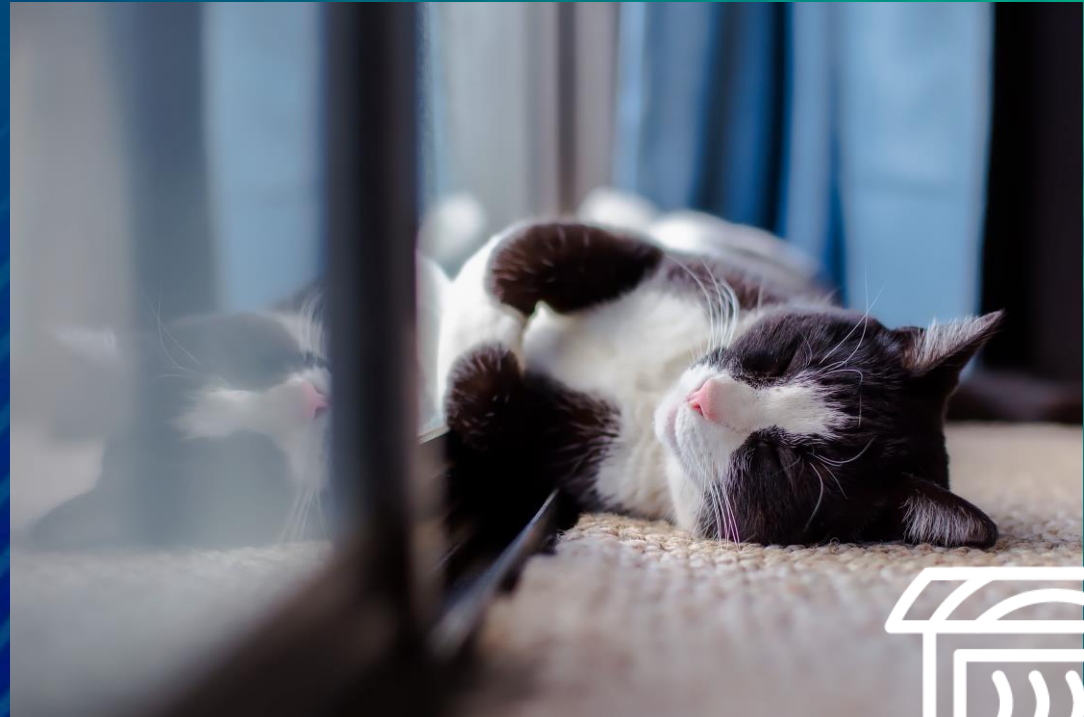


Thank you

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Challenges in addressing fuel poverty

- Quantifying the issue and effectively targeting
- Accessibility & reach – getting to the most vulnerable
- Cross-departmental, multi-stakeholder issue
- Irish housing stock – age, condition, location
- Extent of Irish gas grid
- Private rented sector and split incentive
- Connecting actions effectively
- Capacity of market to deliver

