

The voice of our sustainable
built environment



The Right Honourable Rishi Sunak MP
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Re. Government roll-back on green policies

21/09/23

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of the UK Green Building Council, representing over 700 UK businesses and public sector organisations, to express my serious concern about your decision to weaken key green policies and milestones.

This is damaging not only to efforts to address the critical climate and cost-of-living crises, and to enhance our energy security, but has delivered a major shock to the investment and delivery confidence of our members and the business community we represent. Anger and frustration at this setback are reverberating across industry.

The built environment is the UK's second biggest source of climate emissions. We won't meet our climate targets or bring energy bills down by delaying plans to stop burning fossil fuels and without the support, incentives and regulation needed to insulate our draughty buildings.

Your announcements were predicated on protecting household bills, but the decision not to require landlords to upgrade their properties will leave renters stuck in cold, damp homes with huge energy bills - precisely the group most hit by fuel poverty. Please will you outline your alternative approach to decarbonising this sector and bringing bills under control.

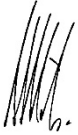
The essential phase-out of gas and oil boilers can still be rapidly accelerated over the rest of this decade, but yesterday's policy delay needs to be reversed, and it still requires homes and businesses to be much better insulated if they are to avoid higher energy bills. Apart from an increase in the heat pump grant, you announced no other measures to incentivise and help households and businesses to upgrade their homes and workplaces. Industry and consumers need certainty to build confidence and support for the changes needed to our buildings. We urge you to bring forward a long-term national strategy to upgrade all our homes and workplaces, including much higher levels of sustained government investment and market drivers such as modernising stamp duty to reflect a home's energy performance.

We polled our members prior to news of your announcements emerged. 80% said greening our homes and workplaces is essential to solve the cost-of-living crisis. 90% said that greening the built environment is the biggest economic opportunity for the sector. 90% were concerned about the Government's approach. So, this parcel of announcements runs contrary to the public policy confidence they need.

I strongly urge you to reconsider and to urgently put in place these policies needed to protect household wallets and respond to the devastating climate and ecological crises we face.

I hope we may arrange a meeting to discuss these matters.

Yours sincerely,



Simon McWhirter

Deputy Chief Executive, UKGBC

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