BUILDING BRITAIN’S FUTURE
FOUR OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEXT GOVERNMENT

UKGBC’s policy platform ‘Building Britain’s Future’ sets out 4 key opportunities for the next government to tackle the crises facing our country by renewing and greening the built environment.

This briefing explores the first opportunity and the game-changing policies urgently needed.

1. MAKE HOME UPDGRADES AN EASY CHOICE

WHAT’S THE OPPORTUNITY?

People want cheaper bills, comfortable homes to be proud of and to do their bit in the face of the climate emergency. But Britain’s homes are still poorly insulated and expensive to heat with climate-wrecking gas and oil, leaving 1 in 5 households in fuel poverty and tens of thousands of people in poor health.

It should be affordable for everyone to live in an energy efficient, healthy home, with cheaper bills powered by clean energy, and resilient to more extreme weather.

Done well, a national programme to upgrade homes can attract billions in private investment and pay dividends to the Treasury, as well as providing skilled jobs in every community. It would also save the country billions on decarbonising the electricity grid by decentralising and reducing demand for energy.

CURRENT POLICIES

There is no national vision or comprehensive strategy to upgrade all the UK’s homes. The Government has provided some funds for social housing, households in fuel poverty, and for heat pumps, but it is nowhere near the scale needed.

Over a quarter of renters live in fuel poverty, but policies supporting them to retrofit are not working. And there is little policy to encourage and support the majority of households – owners-occupiers – to upgrade their homes.

National funding for local authorities and social housing providers to deliver home upgrades is overly bureaucratic, unpredictable, and small scale. Stop-start funding and policies have undermined industry confidence to invest, skill up and scale up. The resulting bottleneck also makes delivery of immediate term retrofit works more expensive and lower quality.
GAME-CHANGING POLICIES
WE’RE CALLING FOR:

A 10-YEAR £64 BILLION HOME UPGRADE PROGRAMME

A high-profile commitment from the top of government to a 10-year programme to upgrade the nation’s homes with measures such as insulation and low carbon heating.

This should include **£64 billion government investment** to help fund low-income households and social housing, a national information service, skills training and local authority capacity-building, as well as **stimulation of the private market through tax incentives** for owner occupiers, and higher minimum standards for private rented homes.

AN ENERGY SAVING STAMP DUTY

To encourage millions of homeowners to invest in home upgrades, the housing market needs to value energy performance. Modernising ‘Stamp Duty Land Tax’ so rates are dependent on the energy performance of the house would kick start this modest but influential shift in market value.

A ‘rebate to renovate’ reward, with enhanced rebate for low-income households, would incentivise homeowners to act. This would drive a sustainable market for insulation, heat pumps and solar panels.

ACTION TO RAISE THE QUALITY OF PRIVATELY RENTED HOMES

Energy efficiency is the best way to bring energy bills down, but landlords currently have little incentive to invest. The next government should require landlords to achieve an **Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C by 2030**.

This would reduce the risk of arrears for landlords and increase the value of improved property.

Adjustments to tax deductions and rental contracts can help incentivise landlords to act and protect tenants.

SUPPORT TO SCALE UP LOCAL CAPACITY AND SKILLS

The next government should give local governments the devolved powers, responsibility, and resources they need to play a major role in the delivery of a nationwide home upgrade programme.

This should start with **fixing the broken grants schemes**, scaling them up with more predictable funding.

Dedicated funding for **skilled retrofit officers in each council** would transform capacity to develop local plans, attract wider investment, engage with households and supply chains, and oversee local ‘one stop shop’ retrofit services.

GET INVOLVED

- [Visit our website](#), a central hub for the general election and beyond.
- Read our 4 point policy platform ‘Building Britain’s Future’ and our other policy guides.
- Contact us at [policy@ukgbc.org](mailto:policy@ukgbc.org).

FURTHER RESOURCES

- [National Retrofit Investment Calculator](#)
- [Energy Saving Stamp Duty Incentive guide](#)
- [Local Area Retrofit Toolkit](#)
- [The Whole Life Carbon Roadmap](#)
- [Regenerative Places Programme](#)