



# 8 PRIORITIES TO GUARANTEE WARM HOMES FOR ALL

IN THE NEXT PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

The above coalition of civil society organisations urge all political parties and candidates to commit to urgent and transformative action to **eradicate energy poverty** and **ensure a just transition away from fossil fuels for all**. The Government must prioritise urgent action to protect households at-risk of energy poverty and ensure we don't lock these households into **fossil fuel dependence, high energy costs, and inefficient homes** for years to come. Therefore, we urge parties to prioritise the following 8 priorities in the next Programme for Government.



01

**COMMIT TO ENDING ENERGY POVERTY BY 2030**

The next Government should commit to ensuring that no person in Ireland goes without the basic energy they need, regardless of income, home ownership status, gender, age, disability, health status, location, or housing type.

A legally binding commitment to end energy poverty by **2030** should be established through a dedicated **Energy Poverty Act**. This legislation should outline measurable, enforceable, and time-bound targets for **eradicating energy poverty** by tackling its root causes: income inadequacy, inefficient housing and high energy costs. The act should set updated responsibilities and mandates for all relevant departments and state bodies- including **SEAI**, the **CRU**, and local authorities.



02

## INTRODUCE A NEW NATIONAL RETROFIT PLAN THAT LEAVES NO ONE BEHIND

The current Government has made significant investments in home retrofitting. However, research shows that retrofit schemes are still out-of-reach for many. To address this gap, the next Government should **expand the Warmer Homes Scheme to include HAP tenants**, contingent on a long-term (**5+ year**) lease, and increase funding to ensure low-income households can access non-fossil fuel heating options, preventing them from being locked into reliance on costly and polluting fossil fuels.

Additionally, a dedicated retrofit scheme should be introduced for rural households reliant on solid fuels and oil. A new trailer rental scheme should be developed for Travellers, ensuring mobile homes are built to residential standards. A zero-interest loan scheme should be provided for lower-income households alongside full subsidies for BER assessments, to remove financial barriers to energy efficiency.



03

## PROTECT TENANTS FROM COLD, INEFFICIENT HOMES

Under Housing for All, minimum **Building Energy Rating (BER)** standards for rental properties will phase in from **2025**. These standards are essential for addressing inefficient housing, and a re-commitment to implementing this policy is needed in the next PfG.



To protect tenants, these new standards must include strict **safeguards against evictions and rent hikes**, with resources allocated to effectively enforce compliance. A new tailored retrofit strategy for the rental sector should communicate minimum BER requirements to landlords and ensure **One Stop Shops** are resourced to guide landlords on upgrading properties while keeping tenants in place.



# 04

## AIM TO RETROFIT ALL SOCIAL HOUSING BY 2030

Accelerate the decarbonisation of social housing by setting a **2030** deadline to **retrofit all state-owned housing to a B2 BER**, and prioritise the installation of solar PV and renewable heating systems. Significantly increased, multi-annual funding must be allocated to local authorities to allow them to resource and plan effectively, focusing on renovating the worst-quality housing first.



# 05

## PERMANENTLY ADDRESS BELOW POVERTY-LINE INCOMES

Energy poverty cannot be isolated from the broader issues of poverty and deprivation. The next government must index social protection payments to ensure they meet the **Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL)**, and raise the Contributory Pension to **34%** of the average industrial wage, as well as introducing a **€50** Weekly Cost of Disability Payment to support disabled people.



# 06

## FACE-TO-FACE ENERGY ADVICE FOR HOUSEHOLDS

Establish a **Community Energy Advice Service** in every county to offer personalised, face-to-face support for households looking to manage energy costs and engage in the energy transition.



This service would provide tailored information on financial options, 'quick-win' insulation measures, and available grants for retrofitting and heat pumps. It could also work with community organisations, health services, and local NGOs to ensure support is reaching those most in-need.



# 07

## EXPAND AND TARGET ENERGY SUPPORTS

The next government must commit to introducing an **Energy Guarantee Scheme**, a payment indexed to the changing cost of energy, to ensure that people will always be assured of a minimum quantity of energy to keep their homes warm, particularly those on low incomes and/or in poorly insulated homes. To address the immediate financial hardship of energy costs, existing support schemes such as the Fuel Allowance must be increased and expanded to support low-income working households such as those in receipt of **Working Family Payment**.



# 08

## ENSURING A JUST AND INCLUSIVE ENERGY TRANSITION

Given the disproportionate impact of energy poverty on the most vulnerable and marginalised in our society, a rights-based approach to the energy transition is vital. This means **ensuring the needs and voices of people most impacted by energy deprivation are prioritised** at every step in the development of new policies and plans, including in phasing out fossil fuel heating. Dedicated funding and support should be directed to **community-led groups** and organisations to drive climate action and ensure that energy efficiency measures reach those who need them most.