

The EWI industry stands ready to work with Government to upgrade Britain’s homes and cut fuel poverty

27.07.2024

With imagery

Early in 2024 INCA, the recognised trade association for the UK external wall insulation (EWI) industry, published a document outlining its three core messages for optimising the delivery of an effective nationwide retrofit programme.

Since then a lot has changed! We have a new government, a new Secretary of State for Energy Efficiency and Net Zero, election pledges to significantly increase investment in the retrofit sector and the potential for different forms of funding initiatives in support of a new national “Warm Homes Plan”.

Under this plan Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer vowed that Labour would “upgrade every one of the 19 million homes below an EPC B and C over the course of the decade”, claiming that upgrading these poorly insulated homes across the country would save families around £500 per year on energy bills.

Whilst the political landscape and rhetoric may have changed when it comes to the actual delivery of these domestic upgrades INCAs core messages for retrofit remain unchanged. Namely:

1: A fabric first approach to retrofit

Insulate the very fabric of the building itself before addressing renewable energy upgrades in order to maximise bill savings and carbon reduction.

2: Simplification of administrative processes and controls

Simplify the administrative burden in order to maximise the percentage of funding spent on the measures themselves rather than administration in order to deliver retrofit efficiently but without compromise to quality, compliance or risk.

3: Continuity of funding obligations

Whatever form the funding takes it’s important to avoid the historical delivery peaks and troughs associated with short term funding initiative and increase industry confidence and assurance to drive investment in skills, education and training.

Ed Milliband, the now Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero was also quoted, pre-election, as saying “Labour’s Warm Homes Plan would upgrade the 19 million homes that need it, cutting bills and creating thousands of good jobs for electricians, engineers, and construction workers across the country”.

Since his ministerial appointment Mr Miliband has listed the “upgrading Britain’s homes and cutting fuel poverty through our Warm Homes Plan” amongst his six initial priorities for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

Funding too looks set to be increased ... considerably! With an election pledge to invest an extra £6.6bn during the current parliament in upgrading the energy efficiency of homes.

Final details of how the plan will be funded is yet to be set out but there’s talk of free cash grants or low-interest loans. With that in mind INCA have added an additional forth core message to government ... engage and collaborate with the energy efficiency industry.

The sector has seen many different funding initiatives and incentives over recent years – with, shall we say, “mixed” success rates! From a delivery perspective the industry itself knows what works and what doesn’t and so we call on the Government to engage and collaborate with these key stakeholders to ensure that, whatever form the future funding takes, that it’s workable, efficient and effectively delivers from both a consumer and a delivery perspective.

The increased investment is welcomed, as is the priority focus on domestic retrofit. INCA now call on the Government to work with the energy efficiency industry so that together we can agree on a workable framework that will efficiently deliver the results at scale without compromise or risk to quality in any way.

John Sparrow, Executive Director at INCA said:

“INCA welcome the increase in investment outlined by the new government along with the prioritised focus on the delivery of energy efficiency retrofit upgrades to millions of homes across the whole country. Thus, cutting energy bills, reducing fuel poverty and making a difference to millions of lives across the country”.

“We call on the new Government to not only support our three core messages through the endorsement of a fabric first approach to retrofit, further simplification of administrative controls and processes along with a commitment to longer term funding initiatives but also call on them to openly engage with INCA and the wider energy efficiency industry so that together we can agree on, structure and establish an efficient and effective funding and delivery mechanism that works for the Government, industry and the consumer”.

ENDS

For more information contact John Sparrow at INCA: john@inca-ltd.org.uk

Notes to Editor

About INCA

- INCA is the recognised trade association for the External Wall Insulation (EWI) industry representing system designers, specialist installers and key component suppliers.
- INCA has proven longevity as a trade body dating back 40 years and our current membership is 75, please refer to the INCA website for a current breakdown of our membership types: contractors, manufacturers and associates.
- INCA's vision: The delivery of growth in sustainable fabric performance solutions as the primary focus in combating fuel poverty and protecting the environment.
- INCA's mission: To represent and support members of the External Wall Insulation industry through technical excellence, effective collaboration, strong communications and member benefits. Imagery/name captions