

Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) is an umbrella body for organisations working in the built environment in Scotland. Drawing on extensive expertise in a membership-led forum, BEFS informs, debates and advocates on the strategic issues, opportunities and challenges facing Scotland's historic and contemporary built environment.

BEFS would stress that our existing built environment is the most sustainable building resource we have. The embodied energy present, and the potential for positive interventions is huge. Adapting and repurposing these buildings presents an enormous opportunity to provide climate solutions, solutions which benefit people and place.

BEFS would like to respond to the first question within the Consultation.

Q1. What additional training, information or guidance do you think Public Sector Bodies need to help them increase their action on climate change?

Within this broad question BEFS would like to highlight the following:

Public Sector Bodies will need to get information and guidance from Historic Environment Scotland (HES), and appropriate private sector organisations, when considering their estates. There is information available, which will enable:

- An understanding of appropriate interventions for historic buildings
- Appropriate planning and adaptation concerns, for their estates – taking into account the importance of place based approaches (such as is described by the Place Principle).

There will also need to be a greater awareness of:

- Unintended consequences, particularly around desirability of heritage buildings for place based regeneration, and not disadvantaging them unnecessarily over (potentially misplaced) energy-efficiency concerns.
- Appreciate (and support research into) embodied energy values, and whole-life carbon cost modelling, for the existing built environment
- Understanding that the current EPC assessments can fail to accurately assess historic buildings, to their detriment. Please see BEFS previous responses to other consultations in relation to EPC information: <https://www.befs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Energy-Efficient-Scotland-Consultation-Response.pdf> and <https://www.befs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/17.06.30.BEFSresponse.EnergyEfficiency-in-Private-Rented-Housing.docx.pdf>

Public Sector Bodies will also need to take into account the importance of land and landscape when considering the possibility of large scale interventions. Advice should be sought on the importance that can be played by drainage schemes and peat-land restoration – Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry & Land Scotland, and the Landscape Institute can provide guidance.

This is in addition to any archaeological advice which will be necessary in relation to schemes such as District Heating installation. For this Association of Local Government Archaeology Officers (ALGAO) as well as HES can provide guidance.

The Built Environment sector have asked the Scottish Government to consider introducing policy to incentivise a culture change; driving maintenance, retention, reuse and repurposing of existing heritage assets rather than the current default to ignore, replace or dispose of them. BEFS would stress that this policy would be key to enabling Public Bodies better tackle climate change.

The Role of Public Bodies in Tackling Climate Change Consultation response

22nd November 2019

The private sector have also expressed that when public sector bodies are reducing the size of their estate, the poor condition of buildings is a barrier to investment, redevelopment, and the continued sustainability of the built environment. Maintenance and mothballing of these assets prior to sale would increase their attractiveness for further investment.

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Responding on behalf of an Organisation - **BEFS** (Built Environment Forum Scotland)

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference: **Publish response with name**

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise? **YES**