

Decarbonising for Better Health: Levelling Up via the Energy Transition

Chair: Mr Clive Betts MP

23 March 2022 at 10:30 – 12:15; via [Zoom](#), Meeting ID: 277 391 9410

Event Overview:

As the UK prepares to move away from fossil fuels, the All-Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group (APPCOG), Carbon Connect and Policy Connect Health will explore how the objectives of zero carbon homes, improving indoor air quality, and levelling up health inequalities can come together to deliver greater public benefit. The event aims to:

- Explore the health benefits decarbonisation can bring through improving indoor air quality, specifically in relation to carbon monoxide.
- Outline the opportunities for levelling up health and addressing fuel poverty via the energy transition.
- Consider the various challenges that exist in delivering the government's decarbonisation agenda, specifically for domestic heating.
- Examine the need for consistent, long-term policies, grants and schemes which allow for planning at a local level to achieve decarbonisation goals.

Time	Agenda Item
10:30	Welcome & Opening remarks by the Chair
10:40	Introduction to the Panelists <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lord Duncan of Springbank, Conservative Party, Deputy Chairman of Committees (Lords)• Dr Danielle Butler, Senior Research and Policy Officer at National Energy Action [NEA]• Sophia Haywood, Director of Public Affairs at Liquid Gas UK• Dan Meredith, Senior Manager - External Affairs, E.ON• Beatrice Barleon, Head of Policy and Public Affairs at EngineeringUK (<i>will join after 11:15</i>)
11:10	Panel discussion, with questions from the Chair
11:50	Questions from the floor
12:10	Chair's closing remarks
12:15	Close of meeting

Attendee Briefing:

Contents:

- Background to Decarbonisation & Carbon Connect reports
- Indoor Air Quality and Carbon Monoxide
- Exposure to Carbon Monoxide in our Homes
- Recent Developments in Carbon Monoxide Policy
- Speaker Biographies
- Organisers

Background to Decarbonisation & Carbon Connect reports

Connecting the Watts: The Case for a Net Zero Delivery Authority (2021)

The Heat and Buildings Strategy and Net Zero Strategy set ambitious targets and commitments to bring the UK in line to achieve our net zero goals. Achieving this needs clear and strong delivery leadership, learning from the UK's past successes such as the world-acclaimed London Olympics.

Carbon Connect calls for a **Net Zero Delivery Authority** to provide delivery leadership in England to make net zero happen. It would ensure delivery on the strategies, facilitating cross-departmental action. The Authority would be the lynchpin in a whole-systems, coordinated approach that connects central to local, people to policymakers and the UK to its net zero carbon future.

The Authority should be established in statute so as to have the autonomy to make the necessary implementation decisions. It would need to work with the UK's nations and regions. To provide assurance to business and people about its longevity and clout, it should be sponsored jointly by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT).

The report also calls for:

1. Every government department to publicly sign up to apply a **Net Zero Test** to its individual strategies and policies and be held to account.
2. **Local government and its partners** – who have the reach into local communities and businesses – to be empowered to plan the transition and resourced to make it happen, street by street.
3. The government to establish a network of **independent consumer information hubs**, which would provide information about net zero, consumer protections and offer tailored advice, ensuring no one is left behind.

Pipeline to 2050 (2020)

This report sets out recommendations for the Heat and Buildings Strategy and calls for a joined-up approach that simultaneously addresses all aspects of heat decarbonisation.

The report highlights that currently there is a patchwork of heat policy initiatives. Although they might incentivise positive development, they are nevertheless too dispersed and not sufficient to drive the level of coordinated action that is needed, given the complexity of heat decarbonisation.

The report recommends that the Heat and Buildings Strategy needs to put forward a systematic approach that joins up all policy aspects and principles needed for the transition to low carbon heat. Moreover, given the cross-sectoral engagement needed between consumers, industry, research and various levels of the government, it argues that the Strategy has to be constructed in a way that simultaneously catalyses action from all stakeholders that are needed to take part in the process for effective heat decarbonisation.

Uncomfortable Home Truths (2019)

This report is the third in the Future Gas Series, which has explored the opportunities and challenges associated with using low carbon gas in the energy system, and is backed by cross-party parliamentary co-chairs.

UK homes are primarily heated by fossil fuels and contribute 13% of the UK's carbon footprint (equivalent to all the UK's 38.4m cars). This report says this is incompatible with UK climate legislation targeting a net-zero economy by 2050. Polling finds that consumers are open to cleaner, greener ways to heat their homes into the future but that they are "still in the dark about smarter, greener heating solutions and lack access to independent advice to help them make better decisions for their homes, pockets and the planet".

Uncomfortable Home Truths recommends the creation of an Olympic-style delivery body to catalyse and coordinate regional innovation and local leadership, tailored to different parts of the UK and the nation's diverse housing stock.

Indoor Air Quality and Carbon Monoxide

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) has been gathering interest over recent years, in part due to the increased amount of time that most of us are spending inside our homes due to the pandemic, and in part due an increased public awareness of the pollutants contained in indoor air. The Clean Air Hub¹, developed by Global Action Plan, categorises air pollution into four types: particle pollution, gases, chemicals, and mould. Many of these pollutants are caused by burning carbon-based fuels such as wood or petrol. However, the gas carbon monoxide can present an immediate danger, due to its ability to starve the body of oxygen by taking over haemoglobin in the bloodstream. This is why it is so important to have a carbon monoxide alarm, and to understand the signs that carbon monoxide can be acting on the body. Responding swiftly can save lives and prevent permanent damage from this airborne poison.

At sub-lethal levels, carbon monoxide acts as a poison and is linked with a range of detrimental health effects. Although evidence is not yet conclusive, sub-lethal carbon monoxide poisoning has been associated with:

- Brain damage
- Dementia
- Hearing and visual impairments

¹ [Clean Air Hub | What is air pollution](#)

- Heart Disease
- Low Birth Weight in babies
- Cognitive developmental delays in infants (when pregnant mother has been exposed)
- Parkinsonism
- Respiratory difficulties

In order to improve clinical awareness of the harm from carbon monoxide, the Royal College of Nursing have launched a series of [e-learning modules on carbon monoxide](#) which are freely available to access.

The latest data from National Poisons Information Service indicates that the majority (57.3%) of exposures to carbon monoxide occur in the home. Decarbonising our homes has the potential to reduce greatly, or eliminate, the risk of domestic carbon monoxide exposure, improving indoor air quality and protecting the health of households up and down Britain.

Exposure to Carbon Monoxide in our Homes

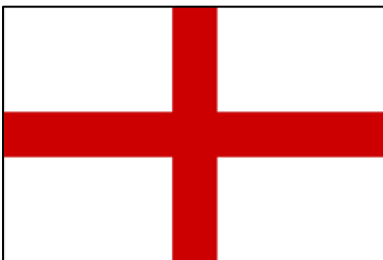
Carbon monoxide can form when any carbon-based fuel is burnt. Typical sources include gas appliances, petrol engines, and solid fuel (e.g., fires and stoves). The latest data from National Poisons Information Service indicates that the majority (57.3%) of exposures occur in the home. Although there is no way of knowing the true picture of domestic exposure in the UK (as carbon monoxide is often undetected) these studies provide an insight:

1 in 5 homes has at least one faulty gas appliance
[Gas Safe Register, 2019](#)

56% of homes in England do not have a carbon monoxide alarm
[English Housing Survey, 2019 – 2020](#)

1 in 8 homes in London found to have levels of carbon monoxide that exceed WHO limits for 1 hour
[Croxford et al. 2006](#)

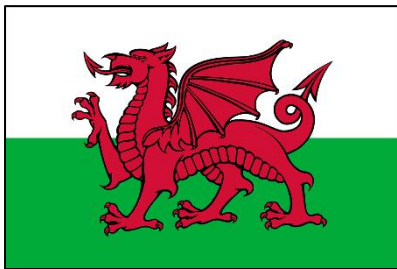
Recent Developments in Carbon Monoxide Policy



On **23 November 2021**, the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC), announced the [outcome of the consultation](#) on domestic smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Previously in England, only privately rented homes with solid fuel burning appliances were required to have a carbon monoxide alarm. The changes will require a carbon monoxide alarm in all rooms in rented properties where there is a fixed combustion appliance, excluding gas cookers, amending amend Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015. Approved Document J will be amended, so that carbon monoxide alarms are required in all new installations of fixed combustion appliances, excluding gas cookers. Landlords will be required to repair or replace alarms once informed of a fault.



The regulations for [smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in Scotland](#) were brought into force on **1 February 2022**. All Scottish homes, regardless of tenure, must have interlinked smoke and heat alarms, and carbon monoxide alarms (which do not need to be interlinked) with a carbon fuelled appliance, excluding gas cookers. The Scottish government has funded the Fire and Rescue Service and others to deliver this agenda.



The Welsh Government will bring forward [changes from 15 July 2022](#) with the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, requiring landlords to ensure working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are fitted in their tenanted properties where there are fixed combustion appliances, including gas cookers. Landlords will have a duty to fit and maintain alarms under the 'Fit For Human Habitation' (FFHH) 2022 regulations. Welsh Fire and Rescue Service have government funding to support this.



Further consideration of The Private Tenancies Bill 2022 closed **7 March 2022**. The Bill is for privately rented homes and requires carbon monoxide alarms for all fixed combustion appliances, including gas cookers. It places duties on landlords to repair alarms, and on tenants to care for the alarm. Alarm type may be mandated by regulation. Carbon monoxide alarms are required for all homes where a new fossil fuel appliance is installed [The Building Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2012](#).

Speaker Biographies



Chair: Mr Clive Betts MP, Labour MP for Sheffield South East & Chair of The Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Commons Select Committee Mr. Betts is the Labour Member of Parliament for Sheffield South East, and an Officer of the APPCOG. Prior to entering the House of Commons, Mr Betts was a Sheffield City councillor from 1976 to 1992. From 1992 to 2010, he was the Member of Parliament for Sheffield Attercliffe. Mr Betts is Chair of the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Commons Select Committee. Mr Betts is also the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Arm's Length Management Organisations. Alongside a career in politics, Mr Betts has served as an economist at the Trade Union Congress and worked for a number of local councils.

Lord Duncan of Springbank, Conservative Party, Deputy Chairman of Committees (Lords)

Lord Duncan was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy from July 2019 to February 2020. He was also Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. He was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Scotland Office from June 2017 to July 2019 and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales between June and October 2017.

Lord Duncan launched Carbon Connect's Uncomfortable Home Truths report in 2019 as Climate Change Minister and subsequently co-chaired the Pipeline to 2050 report in 2020.





Dr Danielle Butler, Senior Research and Policy Officer at National Energy Action [NEA]

Dr Danielle Butler is Senior Research and Policy Officer at leading fuel poverty charity National Energy Action and Trustee and Founder of the Fuel Poverty Research Network. In recent years, Danielle's work has focused on the lived experience of fuel poverty among 'at risk' groups, considering key factors such as householder age and rurality. She is particularly interested in the role of social relations and the design and development of energy-related advice and support. Danielle has worked extensively with a wide range of research funders, partners and other key stakeholders including government, the health sector, statutory, and third sector organisations, both in the UK and beyond. She holds a number of related external positions, including Academic Advisor to the International Energy Agency's Task 24 on engaging hard to reach energy users.

Sophia Haywood, Director of Public Affairs at Liquid Gas UK

Sophia is Liquid Gas UK's lead on all public policy and lobbying activity. She is responsible for building relationships with policy makers and influencers across the four UK nations, in order to effectively inform policy and regulation on behalf of the LPG Industry. Through Sophia's work Liquid Gas UK Members' voices are heard across a wide scope of policy areas including energy, transport, low carbon heat and industrial carbonisation; signalling the key role LPG and bioLPG can play in the future energy mix. Sophia developed and launched the 2040 Vision to demonstrate the industry's ambition to meet Net Zero, and raise the profile of LPG and bioLPG among the media and policy makers.



Dan Meredith, Senior Manager - External Affairs, E.ON

Dan is an energy policy specialist and has worked in the energy industry on policy, communications and political affairs for more than 20 years. Trained in a background of ecology and environmental science, he joined Powergen's corporate environment team in the 1990s, and then went on to work in windfarm development for Powergen and E.ON before moving to a Government affairs role, working in Brussels and Munich as well as in London. Between 2010 and 2015, Dan worked for RWE and npower on strategic communications, representing the company in the media, before moving back to E.ON to lead their Public Affairs team in 2015.

Beatrice Barleon, Head of Policy and Public Affairs at EngineeringUK

Beatrice joined EngineeringUK in February 2020. In this role, she works closely with EngineeringUK's research team, and communicates the organisation's research findings and recommendations to policymakers and other external stakeholders. Before coming to EngineeringUK Beatrice has worked in the charity sector for over 10 years in a range of policy, campaigning and public affairs functions. Over the years, she has worked on a range of issues from women's representation in politics to improving employment opportunities for disabled people, including access to apprenticeships. Beatrice is passionate about improving employment and skills opportunities for all.



Organisers

About Carbon Connect

Carbon Connect is the independent forum that facilitates discussion and debate between independent experts, industry and parliament to bring about a low carbon transformation underpinned by sustainable energy. Over a number of years, Carbon Connect has built up an unrivalled portfolio of parliamentary roundtables and conferences, detailed policy briefings and highly respected reports. This has been achieved by drawing on the expertise of Carbon Connect members and working with a wide range of parliamentarians, civil servants, business leaders and experts who give their time and expertise to support our work.

About the All-Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group (APPCOG)

The All-Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group (APPCOG) is the leading forum for parliamentarians to discover, discuss and promote ways of tackling carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning in the UK. Through a busy programme of events and research, the Group seeks to improve government policy, to promote research, and to raise public awareness of the health threat posed by carbon monoxide. The APPCOG is Co-Chaired by Barry Sheerman MP and Baroness Finlay. Policy Connect provides the secretariat for the APPCOG, which was named the APPG for Gas Safety until 2012.

About Policy Connect Health and the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group (APHG)

The APHG aims to provide a cross-party forum that brings together parliamentarians and senior health leaders to discuss key issues on the NHS, health reform and future trends. The agenda and activities of the APHG is set by its Parliamentary Officers, and Policy Connect has full editorial control over the outputs from work produced as a result of this agenda, such as reports. The APPG operates according to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards' rules on All-Party Parliamentary Groups and its own Code of Governance.